Muscogee (Creek)Nation
2007

Middle School
STUDY GUIDE

MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION

(Section of the Study Guide)

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Branches of Government for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation

The Muscogee Nation has three branches of government
1. The Executive Branch
2. The Judicial Branch
3. The Legislative Branch

The Executive Branch consists of the:
Principal Chief
Second Chief
Executive Director

The Muscogee Nation Chief A.D. Ellis and Second Chief Alfred Berryhill, officially begin their term on January 5, 2004.

A Principal Chief and Second Chief are elected every four years by the Muscogee Nations citizens. They were elected October 2003. The Principal Chief is A.D. Ellis and Second Chief is Alfred Berryhill. The Principal Chief then selects his Executive Director, who is then confirmed by the National Council.

The Ex. Director oversees the Office of the Administration which is in place to provide comprehensive management, policy development, administrative support and program coordination to all administrative and program offices operated by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation operates a $82 plus million dollar budget, has over 375 employees, has tribal facilities and programs in all eight districts of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and has a service population exceeding 44,000 enrolled tribal members of July 1, 1998.

The Judicial Branch consists of the:
1 (one) District Court Judge
6 (six) Supreme Court Judges (one judges still pending appointment)

The District Court Judge and Supreme Court Judges are appointed by the Principal Chief and confirmed by the National Council.
The terms of office for the Supreme Court Judges is six years
The term of office for the District Court Judge is four years

The Legislative Branch consists of the:
26 members of the National Council
The current National Council is in their 13the Session
Leadership of the National Council:
Speaker of the House
Second Speaker

The National Council representatives serve a 2 (two) year term.
The National Council is elected by the Muscogee citizens in an open election.
The National Council is elected by districts within the boundaries of the Muscogee Nation
The Creek Nation boundary includes eleven (11) Counties: Creek, Hughes (*Tukvpvtce*), Mayes, McIntosh, Muskogee, Okfuskee, Okmulgee, Rogers, Seminole, Tulsa and Wagoner.
Committee assignments are appointed by the Speaker of the House
There are four (4) Standing Committees of the National Council:
1. Business & Governmental Operations
2. Tribal Affairs
3. Human Development
4. Community Services and Cultural

Executive

Principal Chief A.D. Ellis

A.D. Ellis was born December 18, 1935 at the Pawnee Indian Hospital, Pawnee, OK. His parents were Doolie Ellis and Nellie Bruner Ellis of Concharty, Twin Hills Community. He graduated from Twin Hills High School in 1953 and then attended Tulsa Business College. He enlisted in the United States Air Force and later served in the Oklahoma National Air Guard.

A.D. was elected to the National Council from the Okmulgee District for four consecutive terms beginning in 1991 through 1995. He served four years as the Second Chief. He retired from International Teamsters Union in 1989 after 35 years of service.

A.D. is married to the former Gail Billings of Morris, OK. He has four daughters and three sons. A.D. and Gail reside at A.D.'s lifelong home on his Mother's original allotment on Bixby Road, Concharty, Twin Hills Community. He is a member of the Turtle Clan and Locupoku Tribal Town and a lifetime member of Concharty Methodist Church.

Second Chief Alfred Berryhill

Alfred grew up on the Tallahassee Indian Methodist Church grounds, north of Okmulgee. His parents, the late Lilly Belle Starr (King) and Toga Mekka Berryhill, raised Alfred on and around the church on Celia Berryhill road. His father was a minister. According to Berryhill, both parents made sure he did his chores at home and at church.

His dad instilled the value of education in him and encouraged him to attend college. He attended Preston school until his freshman year, then went on to Sequoyah High School in Tahlequah. From there he attended Haskel Junior College in Lawrence, Kansas and Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, where he majored in business.

In November of 1998, he was ordained as a deacon. His wish is to revive that old way, the traditional way of worship, as his parents and grandparents did. Alfred believes those very spiritual values instilled in him at a young age helped him enjoy success and change his life.

"I give credit to God, My campaign manager," said Berryhill. "At one point in my life I felt as though I was at a threshold, not sure to go on in or take a step back. But God opens the door nobody can close, he closes a door nobody can open."

Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Office of the
Administration

P.O. Box 580
Okmulgee, Oklahoma 74447

(918) 732-7604

The Office of the Principal Chief is
located at the main complex
Hwy 75 and Loop 56
Okmulgee, Oklahoma

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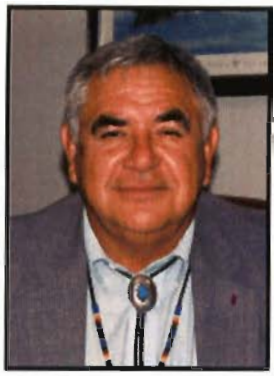
MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION

Chief of Staff, Michael Flud



Michael Flud, who is ½ Creek, was born on March 9, 1947 in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. He is a life long resident of Okmulgee County. He attended Twin Hills Grade School and graduated from Preston High School in 1964. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree and two Masters of Education degrees from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. He retired from the education field in August 1998 after thirty one years of teaching as a school counselor, coach and athletic director.

Flud was nominated and confirmed to the first Muscogee (Creek) Nation Supreme Court in 1979. He was a member of the first court having been re-nominated and confirmed in 1998 to his fourth consecutive six year term. He has served five terms as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He was also on the Board of Directors of the National American Indian Judges Association. He was appointed as Chief of Staff in June, 2005.

Flud is married to Beth Montgomery, who has taught at Okmulgee High School for 26 years.

Michael Flud belongs to the Nokosvlke clan and his tribal town is Tuskegee.

Claude Sumner, a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, currently serves as Executive Director for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. He was appointed by Chief Ellis and approved by the National Council in February of 2005.

Mr. Sumner was born in the Talihina Indian Hospital and attended Gerty Public School in Hughes County Oklahoma. At the age of 14, he started sophomore year at Haskell Institute in Lawrence Kansas. After graduating from Haskell he attended the University of Kansas where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Speech/Drama, and Sociology. He attended graduate school in Utah for Speech (Public Address) and a Communications Minor. Before completing this graduate program he was drafted by Uncle Sam during the Vietnam Conflict. He joined the United States Air Force where he served as the Headquarters Squadron Commander for the 9th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing with the SR-71 Spy plane. He also served a tour with a B-52 unit in Thailand then finished with Recruiting Service in Florida. After his 5 year military service he completed law school at the University of Oklahoma. He practiced law for several years and has served in Administration/Executive positions for different tribes in Texas, Oklahoma and California. He has also kept involved in construction and economic development. He says his Muscogee (Creek) Nation job has been the most enjoyable.

Tribal Seal

MUSCOGEE SEAL

The name Muscogee is an English form of the name Mvskoke which a confederacy of Indians in Georgia and Alabama assumed after 1700. About 1720 British agents designated a group of these Indians as Ochese Creek Indians. This designation, later shortened to Creek Indians, came to be commonly applied to the entire Muscogee tribe. The tribe's name for itself, however, remained Muscogee. The initials "I.T." on the circular border indicate "Indian Territory," the land west of the Mississippi River to which the Muscogee or Creek Indians were removed in the early 1800's. The center signifies the advance of these Indians as agriculturalists, and the influence of Christianity upon many of them. The sheaf of wheat refers to Joseph's dream (Genesis 37:7), "For behold, we binding sheaves in the field, and low, my sheaf arose and also stood upright." The plow depicts a prophecy (Amos 9:13) "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper." The Muscogee National Council adopted this seal. It was used until Oklahoma Statehood. This seal is still the official seal of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation as shown in the current constitution which was adopted August 30, 1979 by the Creek Constitution Commission. On October 6, 1979 it was duly ratified by a vote of 1,896 for and 1,694 against by at least thirty percent of the qualified voters of this great nation.

References: Muriel Wright, "The Great Seal of the Muscogee Nation." THE CHRONICLES OF OKLAHOMA: Volume XXXIV (Spring, 1956): original painting by Guy C. Reid

Legislative

National Council & Committee Listing

Speaker George Tiger is a full blood Muscogee Creek and grandson of Chief Motey Tiger. For more than twenty years he has been involved in the communications business. In this area, he has produced, hosted, and developed several prominent Native American electronic media programs. He also serves on the national Board of Haskell Indian University in Lawrence, Kansas. Mr. Tiger is a six term representative to the Muscogee Creek National Council. He is the newly elected Speaker in January 2006. His major goal is to strengthen the line of communications between the Legislative and Executive branch.

Roger Barnett is a full blood Creek from the Wind Clan. He has worked for the Creek Nation for 16 years, eight in education. Mr. Barnett is a 4 term representative to the Muscogee Creek National Council. He is the newly elected second speaker in January of 2006. His goal is to find new forms of economic development for the Creek Nation.

National Council Committees
Session Palen-Sostohkakat (14th)
2006-2007

Business & Governmental

Roger Barnett - Chairman
Anthony Notaro - Vice Chair
Shirlene Ade
Sam Alexander
Pete Beaver
Bill Fife

Meetings: Thursday prior to Planning Session
Legislative Clerk: Jennifer Edwards

Community Services & Cultural

Tom Pickering - Chairman
Lena Wind - Vice Chair
Sylvanna Caldwell
Bo Johnson
Cherrah Quiett
Travis Scott
Paula Willits

Meetings: 2nd Monday at 6:30 p.m.
Legislative Clerk: Rebecca Mitschelen

Tribal Affairs

Ron Cleghorn - Chairman
Larry Bible - Vice Chair
Jeff Fife
Robert Jones
Eddie LaGrone
Thomas McIntosh

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday at 3:30 p.m.
Legislative Clerk: Rebecca Crowels

Human Development

Thomas Yahola - Chairman
Johnnie Greene - Vice Chair
Richard Berryhill
Duke Harjo
James Jennings
Keeper Johnson

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.
Legislative Clerk: Jayme Spaniard

DATES & TIMES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

National Council Select Committees
Session Palen-Sostohkakat (14th)
2006-2007

Internal Affairs

Thomas Yahola - Chairman
Sylvanna Caldwell (Alt)

Pete Beaver - Vice Chairman
Eddie LaGrone (Alt)

Johnnie Greene
Richard Berryhill (Alt)

Duke Harjo
Roger Barnett (Alt)

Bo Johnson
Jeff Fife (Alt)

Tom Pickering
Anthony Notaro (Alt)

Cherrah Quiett
Sam Alexander (Alt)

Travis Scott
Bill Fife (Alt)

Fact Finding & Investigation

Roger Barnett - Chairman
Duke Harjo (Alt)

Jeff Fife - Vice Chairman
Bo Johnson (Alt)

Shirlene Ade
Sylvanna Caldwell (Alt)

Richard Berryhill
Johnnie Greene (Alt)

Eddie LaGrone
Pete Beaver (Alt)

Anthony Notaro
Thomas McIntosh (Alt)

Paula Willits
Larry Bible (Alt)

Lena Wind
Bill Fife (Alt)

SESSION - PALEN-SOSTOHKAKAT (14th)

2006-2007

Muscogee (Creek) National Council

District Representatives

Creek District

Seat A - George Tiger
Seat B - Duke Harjo
Seat C - Roger Barnett

McIntosh District

Seat A - Tom Pickering
Seat B - Anthony Notaro
Seat C - Thomas McIntosh

Muskogee District

Seat A - Mose Peter Beaver
Seat B - Robert E. LaGrone

Ofuskee District

Seat A - Travis Scott
Seat B - Lena Wind
Seat C - Bill S. Fife

Okmulgee District

Seat A - Robert Jones
Seat B - Keeper Johnson
Seat C - Jeff Fife
Seat D - Bo Johnson
Seat E - James Jennings

Tukvpvtce District

Seat A - Sylvanna Caldwell
Seat B - Thomas Yahola
Seat C - Shirlene Ade

Tulsa District

Seat A - Larry Bible
Seat B - Cherrah Ridge-Quiett
Seat C - Ron Allen Cleghorn
Seat D - Samuel Alexander
Seat E - Paula Willits

Wagoner/Roger/Mayes District

Seat A - Richard Berryhill
Seat B - Johnnie Greene

Judicial

District Judge Patrick E. Moore

Tribal Town - Kvssetv
Clan - Nokosvike

Judge Moore graduated from Okmulgee High School, received a Bachelors Degree from the University of Oklahoma and received a Juris Doctorate from Oklahoma City University. He also participated in post graduate studies at the University of Houston and is a graduate of the National Judicial College at the University of Nevada.

Judge Moore is admitted to practice law before the following courts: Mvskoke Tvlofv, United Stated Supreme Court, United States Court of Appeals Tenth Circuit, United States District Court Western District of Oklahoma, United States District Court Northern District of Oklahoma, and the United States District Court Eastern District of Oklahoma and all Oklahoma State Courts.

Judge Moore is a member of the law firm Moore & Moore in Okmulgee. The senior member is his father, Thomas E. Moore. He is a past president of the Okmulgee County Barr Association and currently serves as a member of the Creek Indian Memorial Association. His great-grandfather, John R. Moore, came to Indian Territory during the removal from Russell County, Alabama and his grandfather, William N. Moore (Roll #1099) was a member of the House of Warriors until his death in 1929.

Judge Moore served in the United States Air Force from September 1963 until September 1967. He served as a prosecutor in the District Attorney s Office, Okmulgee County, for twelve years. He teaches law enforcement officer candidates for the Council on Law Enforcement Education & Training and has lectured at Oklahoma State University and the University of Tulsa.

Judge Moore is a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Okmulgee, Okmulgee and Morris Masonic Lodges, 32nd Scottish Rite and Bedouin Temple, American.

Chief Justice
2005-2006

Justice Larry Oliver

Tribal Town: unknown
Clan: unknown

Justice Larry L. Oliver is a resident of Tulsa, Oklahoma. He attended Tulsa Central High School, and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Police Science from the University of Tulsa. He received a Juris Doctorate from the University of Tulsa in 1964. Confirmed to the Supreme Court in 1999, he has served as chief justice two times and brings his extensive knowledge of the legal system and trial expertise to the Court.

Justice Oliver was employed by the Tulsa Police Department while attending law school. He then served in the Tulsa County District Attorney's Office until he resigned to form his own law firm, Larry L. Oliver & Associates. He has been in private practice for over thirty years with emphasis in tort litigation and is a strong proponent for his clients. He has handled many high profile cases during his career, including both civil and criminal cases.

Justice Oliver is a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Cherokee Nation, Oklahoma Indian, American, Oklahoma and Tulsa County Bar Associations, The American Trial Lawyers Association, the National Board of Trial Advocacy, and the Oklahoma Trial Lawyers Association.

Justice Oliver is admitted to practice before the United States Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit, the United States District Courts, Northern and Eastern Districts of Oklahoma and the United States District Courts, Eastern District of Wisconsin.

Justice Oliver has three children: Lisa, Lori and Lance.

Vice Chief Justice
2005-2006

Justice Denette Mouser

Tribal Town: Thewarle

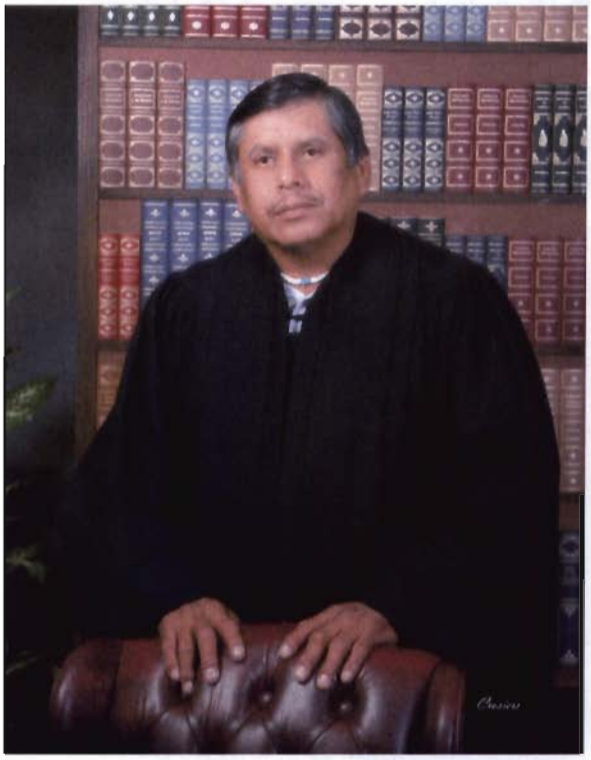
Clan: Bear

Justice Mouser was born in Morris, Oklahoma, in 1954, and is a full citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Justice Mouser is the daughter of J.C. and Betty Mouser of Dustin, Oklahoma, and the granddaughter of the late Taylor and Dollie Fife and the late Amos and Rosetta Mouser. Ms. Mouser is the mother of two daughters, Alysia Jones of Arkansas, and Brooke Swanson of Oklahoma, and the grandmother of three grandsons, Jordan, Tre, and Jacob-Jaylen.

Justice Mouser grew up in Tulsa, graduating from Daniel Webster High School in 1972. Ms. Mouser worked in Tulsa as a professional photographer for several years, and then for several more years as a secretary in the oil and gas business. Ms. Mouser pursued her college education as a nontraditional student, completing a four year program in only three years, and graduating *summa cum laude* from the University of Central Oklahoma with a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy in 1996. She then attended the University of Oklahoma College of Law on a full academic scholarship, with an emphasis in trial skills and Federal Indian Law. Ms. Mouser earned her Juris Doctorate, *with honors,* in 1999.

Following graduation from law school, Justice Mouser was first employed by Locke Liddell and Sapp, LLP, and then by Godwin Gruber, P.C. in Dallas, Texas, and focused her practice in general civil litigation, including sub-practice areas in Complex Litigation, Oil and Gas Litigation, Employment Litigation, and Mass Tort Litigation. In 2002, she moved to Rogers, Arkansas to join the legal department of Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., where she currently is Senior Counsel managing the company's large complex litigation involving class actions and individual employment issues.

Justice Mouser is licensed to practice law in Oklahoma and Texas, and is admitted to practice in the 5th and 10th Circuit Courts of Appeal, as well as the U.S. District Courts for the Northern, Eastern, and Western Districts of Oklahoma, and the U.S. District Courts for the Northern, Southern, Western, and Eastern Districts of Texas. Justice Mouser is a member of the State Bar of Oklahoma, State Bar of Texas, American Bar Association, Muscogee (Creek) Nation Bar Association, National Native American Bar Association, National Employment Law Council, Corporate Counsel Women of Color, and the Minority Corporate Counsel Association.

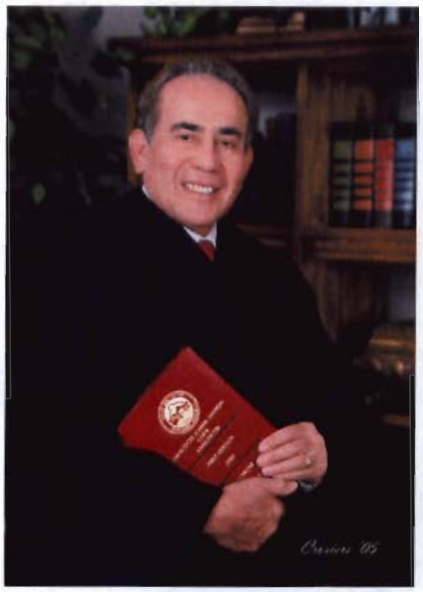


Justice Amos McNac

Tribal Town: Nuyanka
Clan: Wotkvlke

Named a 2005 Living Legend

Justice Amos McNac is a resident of Bristow, Oklahoma. He attended Olive Public School, Technical School in Amarillo, Texas and Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. He was appointed and confirmed to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Supreme Court on July 25, 1992. Mr. McNac brings to the Supreme Court an understanding of traditional customary law of the Muscogee and Yuchi people which is absolutely necessary for the courts. With Justice McNac on the Supreme Court, the customs and traditions, important parts of native law, cannot only be presented to the courts by the people but also can be explained and discussed properly in the chamber of the Supreme Court. A judge must have knowledge of the complex, elaborate kinship and clan of those who come before them. He served as special counselor for the District Court in hearing of a tribal town dispute, which was conducted in our native language. The Courts of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation are required to apply the tradition and customs of the Muscogee people. He has been active in Indian causes, Indian tradition and Indian justice. The rights of the native people to use the religious symbols and to practice and participate in traditional ceremonies and rituals. He as an active participant in the Harjo v. Kleppe Civil Action 74-189, 420 F. Supp. 110 (D.D.C. 1976) lawsuit and was instrumental in the development of the 1979 Constitution, including an explanation of the Constitution to traditional citizens in Mvskoke throughout the Nation. Justice McNac reads, writes and speaks the Mvskoke language. He has also played a vital role in helping the Muscogee (Creek) Nation develop the new language revitalization program. He was a faculty member and panelist on the Preservation of Native American Languages panel for the Sovereignty Symposium XI. Justice McNac served in the United States Air Force from 1963 to 1967 and is a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He is a member of the Native American Bar Association, the American Bar Association and the National American Indian Court Judges Association and charter member of the Oklahoma Indian Judges Association.



Justice George Almerigi

Tribal Town: Cussetah
Clan: Alligator

George Almerigi is of the Alligator clan and is a descendent of the Cussetah tribal town. He grew up in Schulter and Okmulgee. Almerigi received B.S. degree in business in 1964 from Long Beach College in California and a Juris Doctor degree in 1983 from Oklahoma City University. Following his admission to the practice of law in October, 1983, Almerigi went to work for the Muscogee Nation in June of 1984 as general counsel (tribal attorney) and served in that capacity until September 1986, then he opened his law office in Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

Almerigi was elected to the National Council and served there from January, 1988 until September 1992. During this period he was recall to active duty in the US Navy and served in the Persian Gulf War. Almerigi resigned his position as Council member in September 1992 and took a position as Assistant Attorney General for the Muscogee Nation where he served until the end of 1995, when he took his elected position as Second Chief of the Muscogee Nation. He served as Second Chief for four years. Almerigi again served as Council member for two years in 2002 and 2003. Almerigi has served as Community chairperson for the Wilson Indian Community and also the Okmulgee Indian Community.

Almerigi brings to the Supreme Court a background of Tribal government and knowledge of the development of the government under the 1979 Constitution.

Justice Houston Shirley

Tribal Town: Rekvckv

Justice Houston Shirley was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma and attended Tulsa Central High School. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Oklahoma University with honors studies in economics.

Justice Shirley served as a First Lieutenant with the United States Army as an Information Officer for both the 1st and 4th Armored Divisions in Europe. He attended Infantry Office School training at the same site of his tribal town in Georgia, Rekvckv, or Broken Arrow Town. Mr. Shirley also attended Armor and Calvary Officer Schools, and Department of Defense Information School.

He graduated from the University of Tulsa, College of Law specializing in oil and gas, business and Indian Law. Mr. Shirley is a past president of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Bar Association. He has worked as a natural gas contracts and regulatory attorney for La-Vaca Gathering Company, Sector Refining Company and Amax Oil & Gas, Inc. in Houston, Texas. He is admitted to practice to the State Bars of Texas and Oklahoma. He is a member of the U.S. Fifth and Tenth Circuit Courts of Appeal, and U.S. District Courts in the Northern and Southern District of Texas and the Northern, Eastern and Western Districts of Oklahoma.

Justice Shirley is a proud Creek citizen. His great-great grandfather, Horris Berryhill, came to Oklahoma as a boy during Removal from Alabama. He was a teacher in the Creek Nation schools, teaching at Tokpvfkv. Mr. Shirley's grandmother, Gracie Berryhill, was born north of the present Kiefer where she and her family took their allotments.

Mr. Shirley practices law in Bixby, Oklahoma, with the Law Office of Houston Shirley, a Professional Corporation, primarily in areas of real estate, oil and gas, probate and estate planning, business, and Indian Law. He is a member of the Bixby United Methodist Church and Bixby Masonic Lodge, where Chief Pleasant Porter was a charter member. He is married to Sally Shirley of Liberty, Texas. They have two children, Elizabeth and Nathaniel.

Tribal Chiefs

(dating back to 1795 – 2004)

Chiefs during the Civil War:

Sands (Oktarhars Harjo) the Upper Creeks allied with the Union (1861 – 1867)
Samuel Checote the Lower Creeks allied with CSA (1861 – 1867)

Chiefs under the 1987 Creek Constitution:

Samuel Checote	1886 – 1975
Locher Jarjo	1887 – 1876
Ward Coachman	1876 – 1879
Samuel Checote	1879 – 1883
Joseph Perryman	1883 – 1887
Legus C. Perryman	1887 – 1895
Edward Bullette	1895
Isparhechar	1895 – 1899
Pleasant Porter	1899 – 1907
Moty Tiger	1907 – 1917 (Appointed)
George W. Grayson	1917 – 1920 (Appointed)
Washington Grayson	1921 – 1923 (Appointed)
George Hill	1923 – 1928 (Appointed)
Henry Harjo	1930 (Appointed – 1 day)
Peter Ewings	1931 (Appointed – 1 day)
Roley Canard	1943 – 1951 (Appointed)
John Davis	1951 – 1955 (Appointed)
Roley Buck	1955 – 1957 (Appointed)
Turner Bear	1957 – 1961 (Appointed)
W.E. "Dode" McIntosh	1961 – 1971 (Last Appointed Chief)

In 1971 the Muscogee people, for the first time since the partial dismantling of their National government, freely elected a Principal Chief without Presidential approval.

Claude Cox	1971 – 1991 (First Elected)
Bill Fife	1992 – 1995
R. Perry Beaver	1996 – 2003
A.D. Ellis	2004 – present

Tribal Princesses

2005-2006 Muscogee (Creek) Nation Royalty

Katie Burden, Miss Muscogee Nation
Hometown: Weleetka
Clan: Wind

Cherie Cassaday, Junior Miss Muscogee Nation
Hometown: Sapulpa
Clan: Bear

Mulsey Long, Senior Miss Muscogee
Hometown: Muskogee
Clan: Beaver

Lilly Freeman, Little Miss Division II
Hometown: Okmulgee
Clan: Alligator

Shelby Powell, Little Miss Division III
Hometown: Okmulgee
Clan: Wind

Newakis Hicks, Little Miss Division I
Hometown: Muskogee
Clan: Deer

Legends

This Creek Citizen was born February 27, 1943. He married Royce, together they are currently residents of Bristow, OK. He attended Olive Public School, Technical School in Amarillo, TX and Washburn University in Topeka, KS.

He was appointed and confirmed to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Supreme Court on July 25, 1992. He is now in this 13th year as a Supreme Court Justice, during which he served twice as Chief Justice and served on the Lighthorse Commission. He brought to the Supreme Court an understanding of traditional customary law of the Muscogee and Yuchi people which is absolutely necessary for the courts. He also served as special counselor for the District Court in hearing of a tribal town dispute, which was conducted in our native language. He was an active participant in the Harjo v. Kleppe Civil Action. He was a faculty member and panelist on the Preservation of Native American Languages panel for the Sovereignty Symposium XI. He served in the United States Air Force from 1963-1967 and is a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He is a member of the National American Indian Court Judges Association and charter member of the Oklahoma Indian Judges Association.

He was instrumental in the development of the 1979 Constitution, including explanation to traditional citizens in the Mvskoke language throughout the Nation. He reads, writes, and speaks the Mvskoke language. He is currently very active in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal College at OSU-Okmulgee.

This man is Justice Amos McNac.

This Creek Citizen was born March 16, 1921 in Holdenville, OK to Martha Berryhill and Thomas Long. He was raised in the Salt Creek Church area of Hughes County, Oklahoma. He is of the Wotko (raccoon) Clan and of the Tukabatchie Tribal Town. He grew up in both traditional and Christian cultures of the Muscogee tribe. He later married Mulsey Tarpalechee in 1947 and they raised four boys and two girls.

He received a baseball scholarship to attend Southeastern State University in Durant, OK. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corp in August 1942 serving in the Pacific Theater of World War II. In 1949, he became a licensed minister. He has been a much requested and admired speaker and panelist at various events across the nation. Muscogee (Creek) Nation has called upon Rev. Long many times for several different ceremonies.

Fluent in his first language, Muscogee Creek, singing of Creek Hymns is an inspiration to people of all languages. Well known from all walks of life, in all parts of the country, there are many stories to tell, smiles and memories of lives that have been touched and influenced by this man. Among some of these recognitions he was inducted by Kiowa brothers of Carnegie into the Native American Marine Corps Veteran's Association. He was introduced, at the Gathering of Leadership of Oklahoma Candidates, as a National Treasure. This May, the President of Bacon College honored this man with an Honorary Degree presenting him a Doctorate of Humane Letters.

Reverend Long also serves as Chaplain of the Muscogee Indian Community in Muskogee, OK.

This man is Reverend Harry Long.

This Creek Citizen was born March 10, 1911 in Henryetta, OK to Louisiana Sloan Randall and Timmie Randall. She was raised in the Wilson Community area of Okmulgee County, Oklahoma. She is of the Wind Clan and of the Kialegee Tribal Town. She married Clemon Gilroy in 1935, they raised three daughters and two sons.

She attended school at Eufaula Boarding School, Eufaula, OK; Dwight Mission, Marble City, OK thru 8th grade. In the late 70's she received her high school equivalency, GED.

She came to work for Muscogee (Creek) Nation in 1975 until around 1992 when she retired at the age of 75. During her employment with Creek Nation she devoted many years in teaching basket and rug weaving, pottery making, and bead artistry throughout the Creek Communities and even at the Tulsa Junior College. She participated many years in the Creek Nation Festival and she was an active member of the Creek Nation Rodeo Club. In 1985, she was honored as the "Person of the Year", during the Annual Pecan Festival and Creek Nation Festival Parade in Okmulgee, OK. She was featured in a book published by Shirlee P. Newman, "THE CREEK". She is also the Head Woman's Leader at Randall Indian Baptist Church, formerly known as Randall Mission, which is located on the Randall allotment.

This woman is Hepsey Randall Gilroy.

This Creek Citizen was raised on the family allotment in the Morris area. His parents were the late John and Della Fox Beaver. He is of the Deer Clan and of the Weogufkee Tribal Town. He later married Mariam Bruner Beaver. The raised 4 children.

He attended and graduated from Morris Public Schools, in 1957. He also received a Master's in Education from Northeastern State University and Bachelor's of Science in Mathematics from Central State University. He later attended and continued his athletic career at Northeast Louisana State then to the Green Bay Packers under legendary coach Vince Lombardi during the 1960's, he also had a free agent contract with Greenbay Packers. He was inducted into the Northeast Louisana Hall of Fame, in May 1998, and is a nominee to the Indian Hall of Fame. He was head football coach at the Jenks High School for 25 years and the Indian Education Director for the Jenks Public School System. He retired as educator in 1991, a recipient of the Oklahoma Coaches Association's Region Football Coach of the Year and the Tulsa World's Football Coach of the Year award. He is member of the Oklahoma High School Coaches Hall of Fame, American Indian Athletics, and Murray State College.

Among all other accomplishments he served as a Tulsa District Representative to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council for two terms. He also served two terms as the Second Chief of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Later to serve two terms as Principal Chief of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

This man is R. Perry Beaver.

HOW THE INDIAN GOT THE MEDICINE

Now it came to pass that the first Indian who became ill did so after he had killed the Deer. The spirit of the Deer was angry. The Deer Spirit told the Indian, "I gave you the first sickness for killing me. I also have the cure for this disease. Bring your wisest brave to me, and I will tell him how to cure the Deer Sickness."

A search was made of all the Indians. They sought the Indian with the greatest mind. The Council took the chosen one to the place in the dark forest where the Deer Spirit spoke: "Only the man selected to receive the secret of the medicine may stay."

The Deer told the brave that he would have to go deep into the forests and must remain alone. He must not eat for many moons. He must not speak to any man. "When this is done," the Spirit ordered, "return to me."

After the days of starvation in the forests, the man heard a voice speaking to him. "You have been chosen to keep the medicine for all your brothers. You will be their Medicine Man."

The Spirit spoke the following words: "For each animal will give man a disease and each animal has a cure for that disease. You must find those cures. Take these secrets that you find and keep them together. This will be most powerful and valuable. You must guard it. Many will try to steal it. Bundle it up. Each time there is a new sickness, I will give you a sign at the new fire. This sign will help you cure the new sickness. The animals will bring the cures."

"Each year bring this wonderful medicine back to the Green Corn Dance and open all magical cures to your people. When you grow old, you must take a young brave and teach him how to know the cures to help his brother. Give him the tests to make sure that he will make a good medicine man. Many false men will want to get the medicine," the Deer Spirit said.

"I will give you party of my breath. Go and blow on the sick. Give them the medicine of the herbs and roots that I tell you. This will make them well."

The first medicine man returned to the Deer and cut the tip of his antler. This was the first magic object in the sacred medicine bundle of the Muskhogean.

THE THUNDER HELPER

Once there was a boy who had no mother or father. All day long he would take long walks and play by himself.

One day as the boy was walking along the creek, he heard a noise like thunder. When he looked up, he was a Tie-snake and the Thunder having a fight.

The Tie-snake called to the boy saying, "Kill the Thunder and I will tell you everything I know. I know all the things that are under the earth."

Just as the boy was putting an arrow to his bow, he heard a loud noise. It was the Thunder speaking to him, "Boy, boy, don't pay any attention to the Tie-snake, I Thunder, can help you to be brave, strong and wise. Shoot your arrow at the Tie-Snake."

The boy shot at the Tie-snake, killed him, and the Tie-snake fell into the creek.

Now the Thunder made the boy strong, brave and wise, but the Thunder told the boy never, never, never, never to tell anyone that the Thunder had made him strong, brave and wise.

The boy became the best hunter and the best runner in the village. He was good and kind to all of the people. When he talked, the people listened.

In the cold time, the people were very hungry, for there was no food and very little corn. Many days passed, and the boy stood before them and said, "Last night the owl in the tree talked to me. The owl told me to come to his tree. He told me there was a bear sleeping in a hold in the ground."

The young men did not laugh, for they were wise in many things. They knew the boy was wise too.

One of the young men of the village laughed at him for saying the owl had talked to him; but the old men did not laugh, for they were wise in many things. They knew the boy was wise too.

One of the young men did not laugh. He told the boy he would go hunt the bear with him. He knew the people were hungry and needed meat to eat.

The young man and boy went to the tree with the owl in it. By the tree, in a hole in the ground, they found the bear sleeping. They killed the bear and took it back to the village. The people were happy to have much meat to eat.

Now, when the boy said something, the people found what he said to be true.

The time came when the men of the village went to fight. Many men were killed. The women were so afraid; they knew the enemy would come and burn their village. The boy stood before the women and said, "Do not be afraid. I will go and kill the enemy. They will not burn our village."

The boy went into the woods and found the men of the village. He said to them, "Stay where you are. I will go to meet the enemy and kill them. Never again will the enemy try to burn our village."

The men waited in the woods for a long time. The boy never came back. No one in the village ever saw him again.

When the old men hear the thunder and see the lightning, they know what to think. They are now wise in many things. They are sure that they hear the boy call in the thunder, and when the lightning illuminates the sky, the old men are sure they can see the fact of the boy.

"The Thunder Helper laughs," the old men say, and then they go to sleep unafraid.

STORY OF THE RAINBOW

Once there was a great rain which threatened to destroy all of earth's creatures. Bear called for a council to determine a way of stopping the steady downpour, and all of the animals attended. Raccoon, who could be very wise, said, "All of this rain is falling from the dark clouds above. If we can break the clouds the rain will stop, and the sun will shine through and dry the land".

The council agreed, and directed the Birds to break the clouds above. First the small flyers – Sparrow and Meadowlark – rose into the sky. They flew quick and straight, but were unable to cut the clouds. Crow tried, and then Hawk, but they were not successful either. Finally, eagle rose high into the air, and with his wings spread wide, soared through the dark and rainy clouds. All the animals were certain that Eagle would succeed; but he did not.

Rabbit belittled the efforts of the birds. He declared, "Not only can I run fast, but I can jump higher than anyone. I will run and leap into the clouds, and that will surely break them". Rabbit ran and jumped but only rose a few inches above the ground. He tried again but could do no better than before. On his third attempt, Rabbit jumped so high that he lost his balance, tumbled to earth, and landed with an awful thud.

Katcv, the Panther, had been dozing under a tree, and woke to find Rabbit sprawled on the ground before him. After hearing Rabbit's plan, Katcv said "I have been known to leap high and far. I will leap through these rain clouds and cut them in half". Katcv stood, and slowly stretched his back legs. Then with a swift running start, he sprang into the sky and tore through the clouds above. Sunrays burst into color, as they shined through the watery arc of Katcv's magnificent trail. Seven rainbow colors reflected through the sky, as clouds broke away and the last raindrop fell.

Katcv had cut the clouds to stop the rain, and his shimmering trail across the sky became the first rainbow. Even today, Mvskoke people call the rainbow Oske Entacv, meaning Rainbow Cutter. Whenever the rainbow appears, it splits the clouds and lightens all the sky in front of it.

TURTLE RACES WOLF

By: Earnest Gouge

Turtle and Wolf had a race, it's been said. Now Turtle said to Wolf, Let's race. Then Wolf said, No! You can't keep up with me. Then Turtle said, But I want to... Let's run and find out who will be defeated, he said... Well, all right, then. We will since you're the one who wants to, Wolf said in agreement.

Then as he agreed, Turtle began to lay serious plans for himself. The first racer to get to the fourth ravine will be the winner, they agreed. Then Turtle said, I'll wear a white feather on my head. That will be my sign, he said. And as he said, Turtle looked for four little white feathers. And then Turtle looked for four [other] turtles. And he made all four turtles put white feathers on their heads. Then because he had chosen a familiar place for the race, the turtle prepared all four ravines with a turtle in each one. He went across one ravine [to the second one], and looked back at the first, placed a turtle where it could be seen clearly [from the first ravine], and set turtles down in each of the four ravines. He did this before the day of the race. But the wolf did not know that the turtle had figured out a scheme. So he went around thinking he was racing just the one turtle.

Time passed, and the appointed day arrived, so Wolf went. So when he arrived, Turtle was already there, for the turtle was ready ahead of time. I'm ready, Turtle said, and sat fixing a white feather on his head. Then Wolf said, I'm ready, too... When I say Now! it'll mean I'm starting. So when I say Now! we will start right away, [Turtle] said... Let it be so, Wolf said to him.

As soon as they were ready, Turtle said, Now! Now [Turtle] pretended to run, but just sat in the same place. But as soon as Now! was said, Wolf took off, crossed the first ravine and looked ahead, but saw Turtle just coming out of the next ravine whooping as he climbed... Then Wolf went forward with all his strength, crossed another ravine, and looked ahead again... And as before, [Turtle] had already crossed the next ravine and was coming out, he came out whooping as he climbed... Though Wolf kept at it with all his might, they had agreed on four ravines, and from those four ravines the turtle came out first... Wolf was always arrogant about his ability to run, but Turtle planned wisely, Turtle defeated Wolf, and Wolf is still envious, it was told.

HOW THE CLANS CAME TO BE

In the beginning, there were no Indian people on the new lands. A great fog clothed the whole land in darkness. As the first Indian people began to crawl out of a hole in the earth, they were forced by the fog to gather in groups for their protection. The groups wandered over the land praying to the Master-of Breath until finally, the Wind blew the fog away. The first group of Indians who could see the land were very thankful and they called themselves the Wind Clan (group or family).

Each group of Indians took the name of the first thing they saw as the fog was blown away. Other clans that were named were the Panther, Deer, Bird, Bear, Raccoon, Beaver, Mink, Otter, Fox, Mud Potato, Alligator, Skunk, Rabbit, and Snake. However, the Wind Clan was always considered the first clan and the aristocracy of all the clans.

The Master-of-Breath spoke to them: "You are the beginning of each one of your families and clans. Live up to your name. Never eat of your own clan, for it is your brother. You must never marry into your own clan. This will destroy your clan if you do. When an Indian brave marries, he must always move with his wife to her clan. There he must raise his family. The children will become members of their mother's clan. Follow these ways and the Muskhogeans will always be a powerful face. When you forget, your clans will die as a people.

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THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CREEK INDIANS

Ohland Morton

EARLIEST FORMS

The clan system has played a very important rôle in the history of the Creek Indians. It was the unit of social as well as political organization. In the beginning years of the Creek Confederacy there was a remarkably large number of these clans but by the beginning of the twentieth century it seems that there were only about twenty in existence. Many of them had become extinct through the process of absorption and others ceased to exist as a result of the casualties of the early wars.

A number of clans with their constituent families would unite to form a village, in which they lived under a chief or "miko."[3] The miko was elected for life from a certain clan, usually the largest in the village from the standpoint of numbers. Preferably, he was the next of kin, on the maternal side, of the miko just deceased. The Creek woman held a peculiar station; since descent was always in the female line. If for any reason, such as old age or illness, the miko became incapacitated he chose a coadjutor, who was subject to the village council.

The village council was composed of the leading representatives of each clan in the village. Each clan was represented according to its population, but the proportion of representation varied with the village. This council exercised great power, but mainly by moral influence or persuasion. The lack of a real executive body is typical of Indian government everywhere during the early years of the history of our country.[1] However, the conservatism of this council is evidenced by the fact that there are few if any instances of insubordination. Every man felt himself bound by the action of his own representative. All of which goes to show the importance of the kinship group or clan as a fundamental factor in the political organization of the Creeks.

The warlike spirit for which the Creeks were noted was naturally fostered by their position among hostile and powerful neighbors such as the Catawba, Iroquois, Shawnee, and Cherokee. It was this warlike spirit which brought into prominence and favor the warrior class. As an incentive to the young men of the tribe, there was instituted early in the history of the Creeks a series of war titles. The overwhelming passion of the youthful "brave" was to gain one or more of these titles by prowess in the field. In order to become a warrior, every young man had to pass through a period

of severe training and initiation which lasted from four to eight months and upon its completion he was eligible for service in the field and possible advancement to the higher titles.[3] There were three of these titles above the rank of warrior. They were "leader," "upper leader," and "great warrior." All of these titles were granted by the miko and the councillors of the village in recognition of distinguished services on the warpath. There may have been several "leaders" and "upper leaders" in the village, but the title of "great warrior" was given to only one man in the village at a time and, was held until the miko and councillors saw fit to pass it on to another who had gained distinction. The height of every young man's ambition was to achieve this office.

There was between the councillors and the common people an intermediate privileged class of men whose duties were mostly administrative. They acted as an advisory group and also were charged with the responsibility of the preparation and carrying out of the elaborate ceremonials of the tribe. An interesting fact regarding the authority of this intermediate or civil council was that it could initiate military measures either of aggression or defense but had to consult with the "great warrior" in carrying out these measures. Even should the council declare itself in favor of peace, the "great warrior" might persist in "raising his hatchet" against a hostile tribe and lead all who chose to follow on the war-path.

In this case the council was powerless to act.

Each Creek village had its own council house which stood near the "great House."[2] The "Great House" was occupied by the chief and his family and was the center of the social life of the town. The council house stood on a circular mound and was built in the shape of a large cone. The one described by Pickett[3] was placed on walls about twelve feet high and was from twenty-five to thirty feet in diameter. It was here that the miko and council met for deliberation of a private or formal character. When not thus used the council house became a general meeting-place for various purposes. Often religious ceremonies were held here and owing to the utter lack of ventilation the early traders often spoke of it as the "hot house."

The Creek Confederacy was made up of one dominant tribe, the Creeks, and numberless other smaller tribes. Often these tribes were remnants of once larger and stronger ones who had joined the Creeks for protection. The Creek language was the Muskogee and this explains repeated references in this study to the Muskogee Nation. Each village was practically independent of the remainder of the confederacy and in reality formed a tribe by itself. In spite of the fact that the organization and administration of the villages were identical, yet the structure of the confederacy was extremely loose. The general attitude of the confederacy was strictly defensive and often when a tribe undertook an independent offensive campaign it was not sustained by the others.

There was a head chief of the confederacy but it seems that he had no particular position of command. He was elected by the general council.[5] This council determined the policy of the confederacy but issued no orders or commands. It was composed of representatives from the villages and met annually at a time and place designated by the head chief. Each village usually sent one representative to the meeting of the general council.[1] The head chief presided over the meetings of the council. When several of the tribes or villages united in a military campaign a head war-chief was appointed for that particular emergency.

There were two districts or divisions of the Creeks. These were spoken of as the Upper Creeks and the Lower Creeks. The governmental system in the two districts were identical and after 1860 they were united under one government as will be brought out later. They all attended the same general council, which was spoken of as the National Council, but in the administration of their local affairs they were independent of each other. It might be of interest in this connection to clarify their orders of chiefly rank. There was a principal chief of the nation elected from the Lower Creeks who was called the head chief; a principal chief of the Upper Creeks; a second chief for the Lower Creeks and one for the Upper Creeks.[2] The second chiefs were appointed by the principal chiefs with the advice and consent of the general council until 1859 when they were elected by a vote of the male citizens. After removal to Indian Territory, each village also had two subordinates who assisted the village chief in the affairs of the town government.

These second chiefs and subordinates held positions similar to that of a vice-president, in that they had no responsible duties except in the absence or illness of the chiefs under whom they worked.

When the Creeks were removed to Indian Territory in 1832-40 their geographical positions were reversed. The Upper Creeks moved into the southern portion of the Creek country and the Lower Creeks occupied the northern or upper section of the lands assigned to the Creeks in general.

PERIOD OF TRANSITION

In writing on the Creek missions and general conditions in the Creek country after 1837, Reverend George McAfee says, "For several years after coming to their new home the Indians appeared to be thoroughly disheartened, soured and disappointed, and made little effort toward self-government and seemed to be careless about self-improvement.

In 1858, W. H. Garrett, United States Agent for the Creeks, says, "With the exception of some slight alterations, they adhere to their primitive form of government, which is well adapted to the wants and capacity for self-government of the great body of the nation. Many of the principal men are moral in their conduct, and do much by their example to advance their people in the arts of civilization. They are rapidly advancing in the science of government, and are anxious to establish a form of government similar to that of our States. This feeling will be gradually diffused among the uneducated Indians, which will gradually incline them to a change, and the influence that education and association with the white man is exerting will prepare them, at no very distant day, for a more complicated form of government."

Elias Rector, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, observed in 1859 that the Creeks still retained their old system of chiefs. In July, 1859, an election for principal and second chief was held. One of each rank, for the two districts of Lower and Upper Creeks, was elected. This election was for the first time in the history of the Creeks, conducted after a civilized and democratic fashion, and passed off quietly. Motey Kinnard, formerly second chief, was elected principal chief of the Lower Creeks, and Jacob Duerryson, second. Among the Upper Creeks, E-cho-Harjo, formerly second, was elected principal, and Ok-tar-cars-Harjo second chief. With this election the late principal chiefs of the Lower and Upper Creeks, Roley McIntosh and Tuckabatche Micco, retired from public life. They were remark-

able men possessed of vast influence with their people, particularly McIntosh, whose power among his people was almost absolute. He had long been the ruling man among the Lower Creeks and his word was law. Tuckabatche Micco was also a man of great influence, a staunch friend of his people, a maker of treaties, and a good man. Both these men were captains in the Creek wars, and Tuckabatche Micco exerted great influence in removing the Seminoles from Florida in 1857-8. His services at that time were very valuable to the United States.

The Upper and Lower Creeks continued to meet in general council after their removal and in 1860 some changes were made which may be regarded as distinct improvements. During the session of the general council that year a constitution was adopted. Its most important provisions possibly was the elimination of the two districts which had divided the nation heretofore. It further provided for the election by all the Creeks of one principal and one second chief for the nation. Their country was no longer to be known as the land of the Upper Creeks and the Lower Creeks but as the Muskogee Nation. The nation was divided into four districts and the council appointed one judge for each district and also five supreme judges who were to form the high court of the nation. Their duties were to take cognizance of all offenses committed within their jurisdiction and to see that all guilty parties were brought to trial. More authority was conferred upon their police, termed "Light Horse," whose duty it was to destroy all spirituous liquors brought into the nation, and levy a fine or inflict a penalty upon all persons found guilty of introducing it, or the commission of the other offenses.[2] The most decided improvement was the placing of the general council in a position to act authoritatively for the nation rather than as merely an advisory group.

From all accounts it seems that the Creeks were enjoying their unity and were setting about their business of adjusting themselves to their new form of government when the quarrel between the states caused them again to divide into factions. The effect of the Civil War upon the political

and social life of the Creeks was disastrous. It is sufficient at this time to say that there was no recognized government in the Creek Nation from 1861 to 1866. The country was for the most part in the hands of the rebel forces and, after the war had ended, it was nearly two years before the Creeks were able to adjust their differences and re-unite as a nation.

Elijah Sells, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Southern Superintendency, in making his report to the Secretary of the Interior in 1865 observed that there were about six thousand Creeks that remained true allies of the United States and those who survived the Civil War had returned to their homes destitute. Also, there were six thousand five hundred Creeks that allied with the Confederacy and were living in the southern portion of the Indian Territory. They were all anxious to return and live in peace with their brothers of the same tribe.[3]

After the reunion of the Creeks and the signing of the peace treaty with the United States in 1866 they immediately set about to rebuild their homes and readjust their tribal affairs. By 1867 there was considerable agitation on the subject of a new code of laws for the nation. Many of the more progressive saw that the constitution of 1860, while it was a distinct improvement, was inadequate to the needs of the situation at that time. J. W. Dunn, United States Indian Agent for the Creeks in 1867 says that

"The laws as now administered, require four times the number of officers that would be necessary to execute promptly and efficiently under a well-established code. These officers, whose numbers are scarcely known even to the authorities, are poorly paid, and are dissatisfied with their positions and salaries. Indeed, so imperfect is the government, that the duty of no officer is fully defined; so that it is difficult for them to determine when they attain or overstep their authority. They have many intelligent and energetic men among them who appreciate this position of affairs, and who are strongly urging reform. A better feeling is manifested between the late antagonistic parties than ever before, and I am convinced that they are determined to unite as one people in all interests. They are anxious to bend

every energy to the improvement of the country and to devote their money to the establishment of the schools, manufactories, public buildings, and good government."

It seems from the record of the events which followed that this agitation had its effect. The general council, or National Council of the Muskogee Nation, as it was called after 1860, met at their council grounds near Deep Fork in October, 1867. At the beginning of the meeting attention was called to the isolated location of the meeting-place and accordingly a resolution was passed which provided that all meetings of the general council after 1867 should be held at Okmulgee which was nearer the geographical center of the Nation.

THE CONSTITUTION OF 1867

The progressive element of the Creek Nation took advantage of the dissatisfaction with the old government and set to work in the days that followed to promote the adoption of a new constitution. The October, 1867, meeting of the general council of the Creeks was indeed a memorable event in their political history. After stormy debate with the conservative and non-progressive element a constitution designed to eliminate the evils of the old form of government was adopted.[3]

In its general outline this constitution was similar to that of the United States; yet it was unique in many respects. It had a preamble which read as follows:

"In order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, and secure to ourselves, and our children, the blessings of freedom, we, the people of the Muskogee Nation, do adopt the following constitution."

It contained ten articles and provided for a thorough re-organization of the legislative and judicial departments.

An examination of it will show that much time and thought had been spent in its preparation, and that it was well adapted to the needs of a people living under the pioneer conditions of the Indian Territory in 1867.

Article I provided for the Legislature. The law-making power was lodged in a council consisting of two houses known by the peculiarly Indian names of "House of Kings" and "House of Warriors." The upper house, the house of kings, was composed of one representative from each town[1] who was elected by a vote of the town represented for a term of four years. The house of warriors was composed of one representative from each town and an additional representative for every two hundred persons belonging to the town. His election and term of office were the same as that of the representative to the house of kings. The members of the council were to receive such compensation out of the national treasury as provided for by law. A majority of the members of the council constituted a quorum but Section 5 provided that less than a quorum might meet and adjourn from day to day and compel the presence of absentees.

Each house had the powers ordinarily delegated to all democratic legislative bodies

such as judging the returns and qualifications of its members, impeaching members for disorderly conduct, and expulsion by the concurrence of two-thirds of both houses Each house elected its own presiding officers and neither house was allowed to adjourn for a longer period than two days without the consent of both houses Section 10 of Article I provided that the style of the action of the council should be. "Be it Enacted by the National Council of the Muskogee Nation " The qualifications for the members of both houses were two in number. First a member must be a citizen of the Muskogee Nation and second he must be twenty-two years of age

Article II provides for the executive department and stated that there should be a principal chief, to be styled the "Principal Chief of the Muskogee Nation." His term of office was four years and he was elected by a majority of the votes of the male citizens of the Muskogee Nation who had attained the age of eighteen years. Also a second

chief was to be chosen for the same term and in the same manner as that prescribed for the election of the principal chief, and in case of the death, resignation, or removal from office of the principal chief he was to perform all the duties of that officer. In order to be eligible to the office of principal chief a person must have been a recognized citizen of the Muskogee Nation and thirty years of age.

The principal chief was vested with the reprieving and pardoning power and charged with the responsibility of seeing that all the laws of the Nation were faithfully executed and enforced. He was required to make an annual report to the national council of the condition of the affairs in the nation; and to recommend such measures as he might deem necessary for the welfare of the nation.

Section 4 of Article II provided that whenever any bill or measure should pass both houses, it should be submitted to the principal chief for his approval or rejection. In case he approved it it would become a law. If he should object to the bill or measure he was to return it to the house in which it originated within five days accompanied with his objections. If not returned within five days it was to become a law. A bill could be passed over the objection of the principal chief by a two-thirds vote of both houses. In case a bill was submitted to the principal chief within five days before adjournment, he was allowed the first three days of the next session of the council within which to return it.

The principal chief was allowed a private secretary of his own selection who was compensated out of the national treasury

The judiciary was placed on a much better basis than it had been formerly. There was created under the new constitution a high court composed of five competent recognized citizens of the Muskogee Nation chosen by the national council and compensated out of the national treasury. In order to be eligible for a position on the high court a man must be at least twenty-five years of age. This court was to meet on the first Monday in October in each year and had power to try all cases where the issue was for more than one hundred dollars. Three members constituted a quorum

The Muskogee Nation was divided into six districts and each district was furnished with a judge, a prosecuting attorney, and a company of light horsemen. These district judges were chosen by the national council for a term of two years. They were to try all cases, civil and criminal, where the issue did not exceed one hundred dollars. Each judge was given the right to summon twenty-four disinterested men, out of which number a jury of twelve men for criminal and nine for civil cases might be selected. Each judge was allowed a clerk and the judge and the clerk were to be compensated out of the national treasury as provided for by law. Any person failing to obey a summons to serve as juror, without good reason for such failure, was subject to a fine of five dollars. Each juror was to receive one dollar per day for his services to the nation.

The prosecuting attorney for each district was appointed by the principal chief, by and with the consent of the national council. It was his duty to indict and prosecute all offenders against the laws of his district. For each conviction he was to be paid the sum of twenty-five dollars.

The Light Horse company consisted of one captain and four privates, elected for a term of two years by a vote of the district. The company was subservient to the orders of the judge.

Article V provided for the selection by the national council of a national treasurer for a term of four years. His duty was to receive and receipt all national funds, and to disburse the same. He was required to report to the national council at least once a year giving a statement of the condition of the national finances. He was required to furnish a bond of five thousand dollars as security for the faithful performance of his duty. No money was to be drawn from the national treasury except to carry out appropriations made by the national council. When such appropriations were made the principal chief was to issue a draft upon the treasury to meet them.

Article VI provided that: "There shall be a National Interpreter, who shall be elected by the National Council for the term of four years, and who shall be compensated according to provisions of law."

All officers of the government were liable to impeach-
ment, trial and removal from office for neglect of duty. All bills of impeachment were to originate in the house of warriors.

Articles VIII, IX, and X, were rather general and made miscellaneous provisions. Section 1 of Article VIII provided that no laws impairing contracts should be passed. Section 2 of Article VIII was the Creeks' *ex post facto* law and read as follows: "No laws taking effect upon things that occurred before the enactment of the law shall be passed." Article IX provided that all cases should be tried according to the provisions of the respective laws under which they originated, and that all persons should be allowed the right of council. Article X provided that all treaties should be made by delegates, duly recommended by the principal chief, and approved by the national council, and such treaties should be subject to the ratification of the national council; and that all treaties should be the supreme law of the land.

After the adoption of this constitution the general council went into legislative session and passed a number of laws for the new government. The powers of all the national officers were clearly defined in a series of laws classed under the title of "National Executive Officers." The next business of this session was the passing of a number of laws providing for the organization of the nation in general. The powers and duties of

the new judiciary were set out and more fully defined. The six judicial districts provided for in the constitution were created and named Okmulgee, Deep Fork, We-wo-ka, Eufaula, Muskogee, and Cowetah. There followed a series of civil and criminal laws which defined the crimes and stated just what the penalty would be in each case of violation. Article XVII of the criminal laws provided that impeachment charges must be preferred before the house of warriors, and that body would vote as to whether articles of impeachment were to be filed. The house of kings were to act as judges on impeachment trials.

A number of criminal laws already in use in the Creek Nation were approved by the legislative session of the national council, October 12, 1867. They were as follows:

"CRIMINAL LAWS APPROVED OCTOBER 12, 1867."

1. Be it enacted by the General Council, That all cases of murder shall be punished by death upon conviction.

2. Be it further enacted, That the accused shall have a fair and impartial trial, and no one shall sit on any case where he is related to either of the parties by blood or marriage unless it is by consent of the parties.

3. Be it further enacted, That if any person kill another accidentally, or in self defense, he shall not be punished.

4. Be it enacted, That should any person be convicted of rape, he shall for the first offense receive fifty lashes; for the second offense he shall suffer death.

5. Be it enacted, That if any person shall steal property from another, the party thus aggrieved shall receive damages in full.

6. Be it enacted, That it shall be unlawful for any woman to use medicine calculated to cause infanticide; and any woman who may be found guilty of the violation of this law shall receive fifty lashes on the bare back."

Under the title of "Organization of the National Council" a law was passed which provided that the national council of the Muskogee Nation should convene within the National Capitol building at the seat of government on the first Tuesday in October of each year. However, in cases of great emergency the principal chief had power to convene the national council, by issuing an order to the president of the house of kings and the speaker of the house of warriors to call the members of their respective houses to convene.

By 1868 the Creeks had published in Muskogee and English a portion of their laws, and copies were placed in the hands of every officer. This was to insure a more just division of punishment for offenses, as heretofore, judgment had been given by each chief according to his own discretion.

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EARLY HISTORY OF THE CREEK INDIANS

Ohland Morton

(Continued from last issue)

According to the traditions of the Creeks, they originally lived in a distant western country. When Hernando Cortez landed at Vera Cruz in 1519 the Muscogee[1] apparently constituted a separate republic in the northwestern part of Mexico. Their exodus began when Spain conquered Mexico. The Creek confederacy formed the largest division of the Muskhogean family. They received their name from the early English traders on account of the numerous creeks and small rivers in their country.

It seems from the migration legend of the Creeks[3] that after leaving Mexico they started east and after much wandering settled on the numerous streams between the headwaters of the Alabama and the Savanah Rivers in the country which now lies largely within the boundaries of the states of Alabama and Georgia.

The Creeks were sufficiently numerous and powerful to resist the attacks from the northern tribes such as the Catawba, Iroquios, Shawnee, and Cherokee, after they had united in a confederacy which they did at an early date. Nothing certain can be said of their previous condition or of the exact time this confederacy was established, but it appears from the records of De Soto's expedition that leagues existed among several of the Creek towns in 1540. These towns were presided over by head chiefs.

There were seven different languages spoken among the Creeks. These were the Muscogee, Hitchiti, Koasati, Alibamu, Natchez, Yuchi, and Shawnee. The first five of these were Muskhogean; the others were alien incorporations.

Geographically speaking, the Creeks were grouped as Upper Creeks on the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers in Alabama and Lower Creeks on the middle or lower Chatahoochee River on the Alabama and Georgia border. The Seminoles were a small body confined to the extreme northern part of Florida and were frequently spoken of as Creeks.

The Creeks were a proud and haughty race, arrogant, brave and valiant in war. As a people they were more than usually devoted to decoration and ornamentation. They were fond of both vocal and instrumental music. Their most important games were chunkey[5] and a form of ball play. Exogamy, or marriage outside the clan, was the rule. Adultery by the wife was punished by the relatives of the husband, even though chastity in the unmarried was not considered a virtue. Descent was in the female line.

There were some other peculiar customs among the Creeks which are worthy of mention. They usually buried their dead in a pit dug under the bed where the deceased lay in his house. The medical needs of these people were served by female practitioners who effected cures by the use of herbs and "magic".[2] All courting was done with the consent of the girl's mother or maternal uncle.[3] Polygamy was a common practice and existed among them until after the Civil War.

No Creek knew his age. They had no months, weeks, and hours. The passing of days was noted by inserting pegs in a board. By the decimal system they counted to millions.

The busk which the Creeks called the puskita, meaning a "fast", is by some early writers called the "green-corn dance." Taken all together the puskita was one of the most

remarkable ceremonial institutions of the American Indians.[6] It lasted from four to eight days, varying with the importance of the towns where it was celebrated. The day of the beginning of the celebration of the puskita, which took place chiefly in the town square, was determined by the "miko" or chief, and his council.

This celebration was an occasion of amnesty, forgiveness, and absolution of crime, injury, and hatred. It was a season of change of mind which was symbolized in various ways. A general amnesty was proclaimed, all malefactors might return to their town, and they were absolved from all crimes, which were now forgotten and they were restored to favor. In connection with the busk the women broke to pieces all the household utensils of the previous year and replaced them with new ones; the men refitted all their property so as to look new. Indeed it meant a new life, physical and moral, which had to begin with the new year. Houses were cleaned and all old things were burned.[1]

The Creek warrior was larger than the ordinary race of Europeans, often about six feet in height, but was invariably well-formed, erect in carriage, and graceful in every movement.

The Creeks had a peculiar form of government in that the confederation seemed to have no central control. The population of a town, regardless of the number of clans[1] represented, made up a tribe ruled by an elected chief or "miko", who was advised by the council of the town on all important matters. This council also appointed a "great warrior" or "tustenuggihlako." Certain towns were consecrated to peace ceremonies and were known as "white towns", while others, set apart for war ceremonies were designated as "red towns".

The Creek town in its outline extended eastward from the town square and represented an autonomy such as is usually implied by the term "tribe." Every considerable town was provided with a public square formed of four buildings of equal size, facing the cardinal points and each divided into three apartments. The structure

on the east side of the square was alloted to the chief councillors, probably of the administrative side of the government; that on the south side belonged to the warrior chiefs; that on the north to the inferior chiefs; while that on the west was devoted to the ceremony of the "black drink".[2] They had several orders of chiefly rank.

The general policy of the confederacy was guided by a council composed of representatives from each town who met annually, or as the occasion required at a time and place, fixed by the chief or head "miko". The confederacy had its political organization founded on blood relationship, real or fictitious.[4] Its chief object was mutual defense and the power wielded by its council was purely advisory. Furthermore the lack of central control is evidenced by the fact that parts of the confederacy and even separate towns might and actually did, on occasion, declare war.

The history of the Creeks begins with the appearance of De Soto's army in their country in 1540. Then in 1559, Triston de Luna came in contact with the part of the group, but the only important fact that can be drawn from the record is the deplorable condition into which the people of the section penetrated by the Spanish had been brought by their visit. Juan del Pardo passed through their country in 1567, but his chronicler, Juan de la Vandera, has left little more than a list of unidentifiable names.

The Creeks came permanently into the history of our country as allies of the English in the Apalachee War of 1703-8, and from that period continue almost uniformly as treaty allies of the South Carolina and Georgia colonies and hostile to the Spanish in Florida.

The only serious revolt of the Creeks against the United States took place in 1813-14. This was the well-known Creek War in which General Jackson took a prominent part. This war ended in a complete defeat of the Indians and the submission of Weatherford their leader, followed by the cession of the greater part of their lands to the United States.[3]

Since this brief article could not possibly record all the events in the history of the Creeks prior to 1865, it is necessary to omit many happenings which may seem important.

Indian education proved to be a repellent force to the efforts to remove the Creeks to the west. Opposition to westward emigration apparently increased in proportion to the completeness of the transition from the hunting to the agricultural stage of civilization. The Creeks who had good homes, schools, and churches were loath to leave them in exchange for the rather uncertain conditions in the west.[1] Experience had taught them that the Indian's happiness was of little consequence when the white man desired more land.

In 1811 there was held a general council among the Creeks to discuss the sale of their land to the white man.[3] This council voted to forbid the sale of their lands and imposed the death penalty for the violation of this restriction. A large part of the lands of the Upper Creeks were confiscated as a result of their disloyalty during the War of 1812. Additional cessions were made by the treaties of January 22, 1818[4] and January 8, 1821.

In 1823, William McIntosh, chief of the Lower Creeks, took the lead in a movement to sell more land to the Government. On February 12, 1825, he signed a treaty at Indian Springs, Georgia, which ceded a large tract of the Creek lands in Georgia in return for an equal tract between the Arkansas and Canadian Rivers and $400,000 in money to be paid to the Creeks. The Upper Creeks would not sign this treaty. John C. Calhoun, as Secretary of State, refused to recognize it but after the inauguration of John Quincy Adams as President, it was ratified by the Senate.[7] McIntosh was sentenced to death by a council of Creek chiefs and was assassinated on April 29, 1825, at Milledgeville where he had fled and was hiding in his own home.

A delegation of Creek chiefs led by Opothleyohola and John Stidham went to Washington to protest against the enforcement of the treaty of Indian Springs which McIntosh had signed. A new treaty was signed while this delegation was in Washington. The date of this treaty is January 12, 1826. By its provisions the Creeks ceded all their lands in Georgia to the Government and in return were to receive $217,600 and a perpetual annuity of $20,000. A further clause provided that the McIntosh party were to receive $100,000 and moving expenses.

The final treaty which made way for the removal of the Creeks to the west was signed in the city of Washington on March 24, 1832. By the terms of this treaty, the Creeks ceded all the rest of their lands east of the Mississippi River to the Government. They were to have all moving expenses paid, were to be furnished with supplies for a year's sustenance, besides tools, weapons, ammunition, blankets, and increased annuities. This treaty was signed by duly authorized representatives of the Creek Nation and Lewis Cass, secretary of war, as the representative of the government.[3]

There was a strong disinclination on the part of some of the leaders to move west and rejoin their fellow tribesmen of the McIntosh party who had preceded them to the new reservation. Opothleyohola, in particular was so bitterly opposed to such a course that he endeavored unsuccessfully to bargain for a tract of land in Texas upon which his people might settle. In the end, however, nearly all the Creeks migrated to the Indian Territory, though many of them did not go until several years after the last of their domain east of the Mississippi River had been sold to the Government.

Shortly after emigration the Creeks found themselves involved in difficulties over boundary lines. A council which met at Fort Gibson in 1833 succeeded in making a satisfactory adjustment and the Creek boundaries were established.

That period intervening between the time of the removal of the Creeks and the Civil War must necessarily be treated very briefly in this article. It is characterized by progress in religion, education, and the adjustment of their relationship with neighboring tribes.

During the first decade after removal the Baptists and the Methodists were the principal religious workers. During the period from 1840 to 1860 the religious factor in the Creek life proved to be a most potent force in the Creek Nation's advancement.

As early as 1833 the Baptists had established a mission boarding school at Ebenezer. The American Board established a school at Coweta in 1843, and the Methodists established the Asbury Manual Training School near Eufaula in 1850.

During the year 1848 the Presbyterians established a school at Tullahassee.

The young people who were accommodated in these schools showed marked progress and soon improved noticeably in dress, speech and manners.

Practically the same form of government prevailed among the Creeks until 1867. This particular phase of their development has already been discussed in previous articles by the writer in The Chronicles of Oklahoma.

The Seminoles were originally a part of the creek Nation and after much litigation they were assigned lands by the government which had already been given to the Creeks. The Creek chiefs accepted the arrangement but the Seminoles objected because it would place them under Creek jurisdiction and make possible the enslavement of their fugitive black friends. However, in 1845 they agreed to removal to the assigned lands, and submitted themselves to the Creek council in all matters except finances.[1] On account of disagreements over fugitive slaves the two tribes were unable to live together peaceably and in 1856 the Creeks ceded part of their territory to the Seminoles on condition that it should not be sold, or otherwise disposed of, without the consent of the Creek Nation.[2]

With the exception of a few skirmishes with the Osage and Pawnee tribes to the north, there was no further trouble among the Creeks until the Civil War.

On July 10-12, 1861, Albert Pike, as commissioner of the Confederate States, met the representatives of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole Nations at Eufaula. At this meeting and at one held on August 1, he negotiated formal treaties of friendship and alliance with each of these tribes. Thus the Indians of the Five Civilized Tribes were placed in an attitude of hostilty toward the Government of the United States, and the "White Man's quarrel" became the source of the Red Man's woe.

Many of the Creeks remained loyal to the Union, even though the Federal Government seems to have abandoned them for a time.[3] In the fall of 1861 about 2500 of these gathered under the command of Opothleyohola, the aged chief. This group, after a few battles with confederate Indian forces were finally dispersed at the Battle of Chustenahlah, December 16, 1861.

Thus Opothleyohola was crushed. The Indians who remained loyal after this nearly all gathered north of the Kansas Line. Their sufferings during the following winter are almost indescribable. They had abandoned homes and farms and stock. Most of them were scantily clothed, many without shoes, and food was scarce. Hundreds of them died from exposure and fever. Opothleyohola died in 1863.

There were two regiments and one cavalry battalion made up mostly of Creeks which served with the Confederacy during the Civil War. Col. D. N. McIntosh commanded the first Creek Regiment, Lieut. Chilly McIntosh commanded the 1st Creek Cavalry Battalion, and Col. Chilly McIntosh commanded the 2nd Creek Regiment. Col. D. N. McIntosh was

the son of William McIntosh, the assassinated chief mentioned elsewhere in this article.

An examination of general histories does not reveal much in the way of detail concerning operations of contending armies in the Indian Territory, nor does a closer investigation of source material reveal any great strategic advantages gained therefrom. Nevertheless, war, in all its brutality, cruelty and destruction, came home to the inhabitants of that country during the years that followed.

Lights on Oklahoma History, By Charles Evans,

"The Civil War in the Indian country was mainly local. While there were some severe struggles in the Indian Territory, they were given little attention at Washingon or Richmond. The Indian, or Oklahoma region, was a buffer beween Kansas on the north and Texas on the south. The territory was rich in cattle and horses and a good ground for recruiting, and both armies wanted all of this material they could get. It was so ravaged, torn and bleeding, that when the southern leaders, as Stand Waitie, the McIntosh brothers, Tandy Walker, and the Folsoms and Adairs, hearing of Lee's surrender, said they would fight on to the bitter end, the people thought they had done enough. They deserved peace. So on July 14, 1865, three months after Lee's surrender, General Stand Waitie surrendered the last Confederate forces of the Indian Territory and the war in the Oklahoma land was over."

Speech made by Weatherford, leader of the Creeks, and quoted in Goodrich's Pictorial History of the United States, p. 345. n. "I am in your power. Do with me what you please. I have done the white people all the harm I could. I have fought them, and fought them bravely. There was a time when I had a choice; I have none now; even hope is ended. Once I could animate my warriors; but I cannot animate the dead. They can no longer hear my voice; their bones are at Tallushatches, Talladaga, Einucfau, and To-ho-pe-ka."

[1]There were several original clans among which were: Wind, Bear, Tiger, Deer, Bird, Snake, Raccoon, Fox, Bog, Potato, Maize, Fish, Beaver, Panther, Wild-cat, Skunk, Hickory-nut, Salt, Toad, and Wolf. Handbook of American Indians,

[2]Nearly four thousand Creeks and about twelve hundred Seminoles, including women and children, and a few from the other tribes declined to recognize the alliance of their tribes with the Confederacy and aligned themselves on the side of the Union. Rep. Com. Ind. Aff., 1882. See letters Nos. 24, 25, 27, and 29 with the papers from the Southern Superintendency.

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CHIEF PLEASANT PORTER

by John Bartlett Meserve.

The initial years of adjustment by the Creek Indians in their new homes in the Indian Territory, were interrupted by difficulties with adjoining tribes and by domestic troubles. The cleavage between the Upper and Lower Creeks constituted a source of many painful experiences. Reckless leadership, at times, inflamed to animosity and passion, a people to whom war was a reasonable and logical affair.

As the years passed, the Creeks became reconciled to their new environments and wholeheartedly and under capable leadership began to work out their own destiny. Progress in social, educational and political affairs was very rapid. The leaders of the two factions, in 1860, united in the draft of the first written constitution under which a Principal Chief was elected by the members of the tribe. The Civil War again rent the tribe and little or no responsible government existed in the Creek Nation until the war was concluded. A new and more serviceable constitution was framed by the progressive leaders in 1867 and under this instrument, the political affairs of the reunited tribe were administered until the United States Government assumed active control of all functions of government. The Creek constituion of 1867 may be said to be the initial gesture by the tribe toward intelligent, responsible government. From that time forward, it became a matter of capable, honest and unselfish administration. Fortunate indeed was the nation to possess at this particular time, the leadership of honest, capable and intelligent men.

During this era of transition in the social and political life of the Creek Nation, no name stands out with finer luster than that of Pleasant Porter, Principal Chief of the nation from the year 1899 until his death in 1907. Safe, conservative and trusted in counsel, unremitting in fidelity to the best concerns of his tribe, dignified and courteous in association with men, he enjoyed the well merited supreme confidence of the members of his race and the public officials of the United States Government from the President down to its humblest official connected with the Indian service. His paternal forebears had entered the Creek tribe by adoption back in 1814, and shared with its members, the chastening phases of their enforced removal from Alabama to the west. The complete story of the life of Pleasant Porter and of his paternal ancestry is linked with the story of the Creek people from the days of the Creek War of 1813-14 down to their absorption into the political life of the State of Oklahoma. His own public service to the tribe reaches back to the early post bellum days and becomes more conspicuous with the years until death terminated his most useful career. The high qualities of his statesmanship were emphasied by the patriotic service which he rendered during the days when tribal relationship gradually lapsed and its membership became merged into the body politic of American Life.

'John Snodgrass Porter was a soldier of fortune—a son of Andrew Porter, an Irishman of Norristown, Pennsylvania, where he was born sometime during the concluding decades of the eighteenth century. The vast unmeasured west continually beckoned the restless settler and land surveying became the inviting profession for young men during those formative days of the republic. Young Porter became a surveyor which would indicate that he had received at least the rudiments of an education before departing from his home in Pennsylvania for the southwest. His Bohemian instincts led him across the Alleganies about 1810, into eastern Tennessee where he married and settled down among the rugged hills.

The fearful massacre of white settlers at Ft. Mimms, in Alabama, in the fall of 1813 by members of the Creek tribes, inspired the punitive expedition by Gen. Andrew Jackson and his Tennessee riflemen into the Indian country in the following spring. John Snodgrass Porter shouldered his rifle and marched away with Jackson to the south to fight the Creek Indians. He seems to have acquired the

title of Captain during this campaign, which would suggest that he commanded a company of eastern Tennessee mountaineers in this expedition. The measures of retribution and punishment visited upon the recalcitrant Creeks by General Jackson were harsh and merciless. The Creek confederacy was well nigh exterminated by the bloody reprisals exacted by the troops and the settlers revengful of the terrible holocaust at Ft. Mimms. Captain Porter was in vigorous opposition to the merciless sacrifice of the subdued and unarmed savages undertook to mediate between the armed settlers and the Creek chiefs to accomplish a cessation of the horrors of the campaign. He contributed in a substantial manner in saving the remnants of the tribes. In grateful recognition of this service, the Creek tribe adopted Captain Porter into its membership and from thereforth he lived among the Creek Indians. He removed his family to the Creek Nation and settled near Ft. Mitchell in what is now Russell County,

Alabama, near the Georgia line. In due time, information of the adoption of Captain Porter into the Creek tribe, reached his old home in Pennsylvania, causing much chagrin to the members of his father's family. They proceeded to forget him and deplore in silence the disgrace which they felt he had brought upon the family.

After the treaty of January 24, 1826, and probably in February 1828, Captain Porter removed with the firs contingent of the Lower Creeks to the west and settled on lands near the north bank of the Arkansas River in the proximity of the present village of Clarksville and in what is now Wagoner County, Oklahoma. Here he built a log cabin, surveyed a plantation and engaged in farming and stock-raising. During these pioneer days he formed the acquaintance of Sam Houston.

Tales of adventure in Texas where Gen. Sam Houston was gallantly leading for independence, slowly crept into the Indian country and again the spirit of adventure seized upon the restless captain. Sometime about 1833 or 34, Captain Porter leaving his family of children and taking his wife, departed for the frontiers of Texas to join Sam Houston. The children, many of them of tender age, were raised by the Creek Indian neighbors. Whether or not the captain joined the military forces of Gen. Houston, is not preserved

for us to know. That he engaged in land surveying in Texas is an acknowledged fact. About the time of the outbreak of the Mexican War, the captain, now bent with age and broken in health, returned from Texas to his cabin home on the Arkansas River to pass the closing years of his eventful life. He brought home with him as an evidence of his activities in Texas, numerous certificates for lands granted to him in the lone star Republic. These certificates were destroyed after his death by his daughter Betsey and the lands reverted through lack of recorded title. The postponement of the Captain's death was not delayed many months after his return from Texas and occurred about 1847, at the old home on the Arkansas. As he lay dying, the members of the household were gathered to his bedside to receive his final benediction. Bending near his couch was a dark eyed boy of six or seven summers with skin darker than the others, betraying more clearly, the Indian blood coursing through his veins. As the dying grandfather placed his hand upon the head of this lad, he solemnly said, "He will do more than any of you." No words were more prophetically spoken. Captain Porter was laid to his final rest in an old family burying ground upon the plantation near Clarksville.

Benjamin Edward Porter, son of Captain Porter, was born at the old home in the Creek Nation back in Alabama about 1818 and came as a child with his parents to the west. He lived until his death upon the old plantation and was a farmer and stockman. He married Phoebe, a daughter of Tah-lo-pee Tust-a-nuk-kee, a Creek Indian town chief. He died sometime shortly before the Civil War and was buried by the side of his father in the old burying ground near Clarksville. His wife died June 6, 1883, aged 63 years and is buried in the family burying ground at Wealaka, in the southeastern part of what is now Tulsa County, Oklahoma.
It is a sad commentary to note that the graves of both Captain Porter and Benjamin Porter are now unknown. The crude markings were removed years ago and time has wholly effaced the ancient burying ground where they rest. The old plantation was segregated into allotments and the plow has furrowed the soil where they sleep. Tall corn
waves in the warm summer air above their forgotten graves—but in the thought of Victor Hugo, "God knows where to find the soul."

The years of childhood and of adolesence of Pleasant Porter, oldest child and son of Benjamin Edward and Phoebe Porter, were spent upon the old plantation near Clarksville, where he was born September 26, 1840. His life appears to have been eventful from its inception. When a small child, he and a little cousin poisoned themselves by eating wild stromonium, the cousin dying and young Pleasant's recovery being very long and precarious. Later, when swimming with other lads, he was bitten by a water moccasin snake. Scarcely had he recovered from this adventure with the snake when he was thrown from a wagon and his leg fractured in three places. In later years he was given up as hopelessly ill with fever; he was hunted by avengers of blood for a crime committed by another man; he was shot through the head during his service in the Civil War.

Pleasant Porter was a member of the bird clan and early in life received the
name which means Crazy Bear. The enrolling officers placed number 6220 opposite his name on the approved rolls of the Creek tribe. He spent five years in the Presbyterian Mission School at Tullahassee, receiving there a common school education which was to be the foundation upon

which his own habit of home study built a finished structure of learning. After leaving school, he clerked in a store for a brief period and in 1860, together with Sam Brown, drove cattle in New Mexico During his absence in New Mexico, war between the states was brewing and, learning of impending hostilities, he hastened home and on August 19, at the Creek Agency, enlisted as a private in the Confederate Army in Company A of the First Creek regiment under command of Col. D. N. McIntosh. This regiment was attacked to the brigade commanded by Col. Douglas H. Cooper.

Colonel Cooper, having the Indian regiments with him, fought Opothleyahola on November 19, 1861 at Round Mountain near the mouth of the Cimarron and again on November 29th on Bird Creek, north of Tulsa and finally

routed him and his forces at Chustenahleh on December 26th, driving him across the line into Kansas. Cooper had his Indian regiments with him again at Pea Ridge, Arkansas, on March 7-8, 1862, when the confederates were defeated. Cooper was again defeated at Honey Springs near Oktaha on July 17, 1863, after which the Indian regiments fled to the Red River country and finally surrendered on June 23, 1865. Records disclose that Pleasant Porter held the rank of Quartermaster Sergeant. He

was wounded three times, once in the thigh which caused him ever to limp slightly, and twice in the head. His record as a soldier was one of unflinching courage. Upon the conclusion of his military service, Young Porter returned to the Clarksville plantation and resumed his farming operations. He was now without means, the plantation slaves had been freed, the ravages of war had denuded the farm of its stock and the improvements were devastated. He set bravely to work rebuilding the log cabin and splitting rails in the nearby forests with which to fence the farm which he plowed and tilled. Upon his young shoulders rested the responsibility of caring for his widowed mother and sisters and brother. His labors were interrupted in September 1865 when he accompanied the Creek Indian commissioners, as a guard, to Ft. Smith, Ark., when they went to meet the envoys of the United States to open negotiations for terms of peace. These initial parleys culminated in the peace treaty at Washington in the spring of 1866. The shadow years during and succeeding the Civil War had almost completely demoralized the schools in the Creek country. The farm life of young Porter was again stayed when he was called upon to assume charge as Superintendent of the school affair's of the nation. To this task, he gave his first public effort and the zealous, clearsighted service which he rendered, characterized his long life of public service to his people. He reorganized the schools of the nation in 1871, was reelected to the task in 1872 but declined the reelection.

In the fall of 1872, Pleasant Porter made his initial trip to Washington as a representative of his people. It was on this occasion that he married Mary Ellen Keys, at St. Louis, Mo., on November 25, 1872. She was a daughter of

Judge Riley Keys, who for twenty-five years was chief justice of the courts of the Cherokee Nation. She was born in the Cherokee Nation on April 6, 1854 and died at Wealaka, Indian Territory of January 15, 1886. Three children were born of this union, William Adair, Pleasant and Annetta Mary, the latter two of whom are now deceased. The son William Adair Porter resides with his family at Tulsa, Oklahoma. On May 26, 1886, Pleasant Porter married Mattie Leonora Bertholf, a cousin of his first wife. She was born August 18, 1861, and died July 10, 1829, leaving a daughter, Leonora, now the wife of Ed. C. Bothwell of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Early in life Pleasant Porter exhibited a remarkable capacity for business and became prosperous. He ran a store at Hillabee for a brief time, afterward establishing a general store at Okmulgee which he sold out in 1869. He soon thereafter removed from Okmulgee to Wealaka where he built a home and where he continued to reside until 1889, when he again removed to Muskogee which remained his home until his death.

The so-called "Sands Rebellion" occurred in 1871. Sentiments of bitterness between the Creek factions growing out of their division during the Civil War remained unabated and were provocative of this as well as of later disruptions in the political life of the Creek Nation. The Sands troubles culminated in October 1871, when Chief Checote attempted to convene the council at Okmulgee. Sands with some three hundred of his adherents marched upon the Creek capital and dissipated the meeting. Pleasant Porter was placed in command of the light horsemen and with the aid of Federal agents succeeded in quelling the insurrection without loss of life. The high esteem and respect accorded him by the Sands followers, enabled him to effect a peaceable solution of the difficulty and persuade them to lay down their arms and return to their homes.

In the fall of 1872, Pleasant Porter was dispatched to Washington as the official representative of the Creek Nation and thus came the inception of a long period of diplomatic service, so ably and faithfully rendered to his tribe and people. [2]He spent much of his time from this time forward until his death, pressing the interests of his people on the attention of the authorities at the Nation's capital. In Washington, he became a well known and highly esteemed character. He enjoyed the confidence of senators, congressmen and of presidents. The late President McKinley when a member of the House, referred to Pleasant Porter as "the greatest living Indian." In the United States Senate, a distinguished member of that body spoke of him "as the peer of any man upon this floor." He became the personal friend and acquaintance of Theodore Roosevelt. The crude Indian boy from the cabin on the Arkansas River by dint of his own personal efforts drew to himself the admiration and appreciation of official Washington and rendered an unequalled diplomatic service to his people.

It was during the four year service of Pleasant Porter as a member of the Creek House of Warriors, that the Lachar Haijo insurrection engrossed the attention of the Creek leaders. Lachar Haijo had been elected principal chief of the Creek Nation in 1875 over Sam Checote who had held the position since 1867. The Checote adherents were in control of both houses of the legislative body and for some reason, political or otherwise, Lachar Haijo was impeached, removed from office and Ward Couchman of the Checote party appointed to serve the remainder of Haijo's term. As might be expected, Haijo went on the war path and the situation became tense. Pleasant Porter was again placed in command of the light horsemen, but succeeded in composing the situation without bloodshed. Both factions respected him and were willing to abide his judgment and the Haijo followers returned to their homes to await the call of the colorful Isperhecher seven years later. For eight years Pleasant Porter sat as a member of the Creek House of Kings, during the last four years of which he was its presiding officer.

In 1882, Isperhecher, a judge in the Okmulgee District, was charged with seditious utterances, impeached and removed from office.[3] He immediately allied himself with the holdover factions of the Sands and Haijo troubles and established a military camp with some three hundred and fifty of his followers at Nuyaka, twelve miles west of Okmulgee. Here a pronouncement was made of the purpose to restore the Creek Indians to their primitive government and social status. A quasi government was set up and light horse companies formed and provided with arms and munitions. Pleasant Porter was absent in Washington at this time but was dispatched for, by Checote, who was again the Principal Chief. Porter returned and took the field in command of about seven hundred troops and began an offensive campaign.

Isparhecher was driven with his followers from Creek territory by Porter in February 1883, who marched into the Sac and Fox country. An asylum was sought by Isparchecher with his remnant among the Kiowas at Anadarko, but they were returned by the United States, troops to Ft. Gibson in the spring of 1883. There were perhaps seven or eight casualties during the "war," including the killing of a brother of Porter. The insurrectionists were disarmed, released and sent home by the Ft. Gibson military authorities in July 1883. The Creeks refer to this war as the Green Peach War. Porter was highly instrumental in promoting a final adjustment of this trouble and was largely the inspiration of the tolerant attitude assumed by the officers of the United States and the Creek Nation in making a final disposition of the belligerants. By this time Pleasant Porter had acquired the title of General, a title by which he became so well and affectionately known.

Under the conditions and stipulations of the peace treatly of 1866, the Creeks had ceded to the United States the western portion of their domain. This land was to be used by the government for the location of "other Indians and freedmen." It was obviously the intent of the tribal representatives signatory to the treaty, that no portion of the ceded lands should be used for settlement by citizens of the United States. In January, 1889 a delegation headed by Gen. Porter went to Washington and while there offered to relinquish to the government, all Creek claims to that part of the ceded territory which was still unassigned to "other Indians and freedmen." An agreement was entered into on January 31, 1889, by which the Creeks for a consideration approximating two and a quarter millions of dollars, released the United States from all restrictions on the use of the entire Creek cession of 1866. Opinion was very much divided among the Creeks as to the wisdom of this agreement and sale and Gen. Porter, with others, came in for some considerable criticism for the part they played in the transaction.

Gen. Porter was before the electorate as a candidate for Principal Chief of the tribe at the election held September 3, 1895, but was defeated by Isparhecher his ancient foe of the days of the Green Peach War. Isparhecher died December 22, 1902.

The Creeks, at first were little disposed to look with favor upon any plan involving a change in their system of land tenure. It early became manifest, however, that further resistance to the allotment plans of the government was futile and inadvisable. A commission headed by Gen. Porter, on September 27, 1897, reached an agreement with the Dawes Commission, which agreement was embodied in Section Thirty of the Curtis Act of June 28, 1898. This compact was submitted to a vote of the members of the tribe and rejected by them at a general election held on November 1, 1898. However, under the provisions of the Curtis Act, the Dawes Commission began allotting the lands in so far as the surface was concerned, in 1899. This precipitate action by the Dawes Commission awoke the responsible officials of the Creek Nation to the necessity for immediate action.

Events had been moving rapidly toward the breaking up of the ancient tribal governments and the segregation of the tribal domain of the Creeks among its individual members. General Porter had seen it coming. He had sensed the attitude of the government officials many years before the contemplated change in policy had dawned upon the Creek people. General Porter became Principal Chief of the Creek Nation at the general election held on September 5, 1899, and at a time when the interests of the Creek people required strong, capable leadership. When he came to the executive chair, he faced a situation somewhat chaotic because of the rejection of the Creek treaty of September 27, 1897. The retiring chief, had given it scant support. The people were divided, although as individuals they were crowding the land office at Muskogee to make selections of land for themselves. Immediate action was required upon the part of the Creek authorities, if the interests of the tribal members were to be properly conserved. Chief Porter, at once summoned the Creek Council in session at Okmulgee and laid before them with dramatic emphasis, the entire situation and charged them with the duty of designating a new commission to treat with the Dawes Commission. The Creek Council meeting at the old Council House at Okmulgee on October 2, 1899 received the stirring message from its Chief. After a dignified delineation of conditions, the burden of immediate action was laid upon the hearts of the legislators in the language of a statesman. The concluding words of Chief Porter, from which quotation is made, will adorn the pages of Creek history "as long as the grass grows and rivers run."

"Having thus briefly called your attention to the conduct of affairs of the Nation from the time of my taking office, and other matters and things that have had a bearing upon the administration of those affairs, I now deem it incumbent upon me to offer such advisory suggestions as have in the meantime presented themselves to me. More especially do feel it my duty to do this when I appreciate the fact that I am not permitted to exercise the functions of an executive power except to assent and dissent from the methods proposed and pursued by the departments of the government of the United States in the administration of our affairs.

The effort to recuscitate and reestablish a government administered by ourselves thus far has proved futile, and the outlook is extremely unfavorable to success in ever again recovering even the most limited form of tribal government.

Assuming this to be true, it behooves us to cast about and find what is best for us to do. In determining this question it would be best for us to note the immediate conditions and environments and what is transpiring today. Government over us is administered by the United States; our lands patented to us as a tribe or nation are being allotted to the individual members of the tribe under the authority of a law of Congress. It is true and it is admitted that the title to the lands cannot be segregated without an agreement with us so to do. The lands of the tribe were patented to the nation in fulfillment of treaties mutally agreed upon by and between the United States and the Creek Nation and their partition cannot be lawfully made except by mutual agreement of the contracting parties; therefore a treaty or agreement in this usual manner will be seen to be of the highest importance.

Attention has been called to the fact that more than two-thirds of the Creek people have made selections of allotments of the use of the surface of the land, under the provisions of the Curtis Act and have received certificates from the Dawes Commission for such selections. This conclusively shows that the Creek people have assented to and accepted the allotment and partition of their lands and in so doing it cannot be doubted but that they were guided by the unfailing light of events in advance of any positive agreement—as it were by intuition, grasping the conclusion or end to be reached and acting upon it so far as it is possible for them so to do. And it now only remains for the proper authorities of the nation through the methods required by law, by agreement in the usual form, to arrange definitely the terms and conditions which shall be the rule in the division of our lands and other property.

In the light of the facts above stated, it became your bounden duty to the people you represent to expedite the registering in the form of an agreement the spontaneous act of the people, accepting with supreme trust that which a majority of the people have determined upon and acted upon, with study deliberation, as the will of the people and recognize the principle that law, as a matter of fact, is only the changing will of the people.

The vitality of our race still persists. We have not lived for naught. We are the original discoverers of this continent and the conquerors of it from the animal kingdom and on it first taught the arts of peace and war and first planted the institutions of virtue, truth and liberty. The European Nations found us here and were made aware that it was possible for men to exist and subsist here. We have given to the European people on this continent, our thought forces. The best blood of our ancestors has been intermingled with the best statesmen and leading citizens. We have made ourselves an indestructable element in their national history. We have shown that what they believed to be arid and desert places were habitable and capable of sustaining millions of people. We have led the vanguard of civilization in our conflicts with them for tribal existence from ocean to ocean. The race that has rendered this service to the other races of mankind cannot perish utterly.

Though our tribal organization is fading away, we will be transformed as a potent factor, an element within the body of Christian civilization The philosophy of history of the future shall trace many principles of governments and institutions so dear to them, to those found among us.

Trusting that you will appreciate and fulfill the demands and obligations placed upon you by civilization and your people and that you will perform the duties now incumbent upon you as legislators and that harmony and goodwill will characterize your deliberations, let us commit ourselves unto Almighty God and implore His divine guidance and with unmovable faith and courage enter upon the work wherein Christian civilization warrants us the right of way."

With quick response to Chief Porter's insistence, a commission was appointed, with the Chief at its head and this

commission gave to the Creeks the detailed plan as set forth in the Original Creek Treaty. [4]This agreement was adopted by Congress on March 1, 1901 and ratified by vote of the Creek Nation on May 25, 1901. A supplemental treaty by Chief Porter and the members of a new commission was Embodied in an Act of Congress, of June 30, 1902,[5] ratified by the Creek Nation on July 26, 1902 and proclaimed by the President on August 8, 1902. These two agreements constitute the scheme of allotment of the lands of the Creek Nation Bench and bar in Oklahoma today recognize in these agreements, many terms and conditions more elastic toward the rights of the Creek allottees, than those found in any of the agreements made with other tribes. The rights of allotment of the individual member of the tribe, were conserved against the recognized rules of limitation and estoppel of the white man. The unerring mind of

General Porter guided the hand that indicted the language of the Creek allottment agreements. In those deciding moments, he stood like Saul among his people, towering above the multitude.

The fourth and last insurrection against the organized government of the Creeks occurred in the spring of 1901 and is known as the Crazy Snake Uprising. Chitto Harjo (Crazy Snake) was a typical representative of an expiring race of full blood Indians. In October, 1900, he and his full blood adherents instituted a government of their own with Hickory Ground as their capital. Little significance was attached to this action at its inception but as the movement gathered strength among a class of Indians who were opposing allotment, Chief Porter, on November 2, 1900, appealed to the United States Government for protection against the "snake" Indians. In response to this appeal, a troop of United States Cavalry arrived from Ft. Reno in January, 1901, and the leaders of the movement were placed under arrest. Several of them including Crazy Snake were indicted in the United States court for seditious conspiracy, to which, pleas of guilty were made. After an extended lecture from the judge, John R. Thomas, the pass-
ing of sentence was deferred during good behavior and the culprits sent home.

In 1903, General Porter was reelected Principal Chief. The powers of his office had been almost entirely shorn by the substitution therefor, of the laws of Congress. Government was now administered by officials imported from the states. A situation was rapidly forming which was calculated to stimulate the demands for state government for the Indian tribes in the territory. General Porter now became a strong advocate of statehood for his people. The movement crystalized in the meeting of a constitutional convention called by the chiefs of the various Indian tribes which met at Muskogee on August 21, 1905. Delegates were in attendance from each of the tribes and among the names of the participants may be recognized the names of men who in later years fashioned the constitution of the State of Oklahoma and who guided its

destinies in its inceptive days. The Muskogee convention did not lack leadership. With unerring judgment, General Porter was chosen permanent chairman of the convention and presided with dignity. The convention framed a constitution for the State of Sequoyah which was to embrace the old Indian Territory. This constitution when submitted to a vote of the people was adopted by a large vote, only to be rejected by Congress. The Sequoyah movement was most heartily supported by General Porter, who, during the latter days of his life, urged forward the sentiments of statehood for his people.

The duties of the Chief were now perfunctory and with clerical exactness General Porter attached his signature to the thousands of allotment deeds which evidenced to the individual member, his distributive share of the public domain of the tribe.

The declining years of the life of General Porter were spent in the management of his personal affairs. The autumn of life found him in comfortable circumstances and in the full enjoyment of the confidence, esteem and respect of all men and of all races. He was charitable to the degree of recklessness toward the unfortunate members of the old tribe and expended largely to relieve the distressed Indian who appealed to him.

General Porter was a man of commanding presence, standing six feet and weighing perhaps 225 pounds. He was polished in dress and clean in thought and habit. His spiritual affiliations were with the Presbyterian Church. He was a member of the Masonic fraternities, including the 33rd degree. A gracious personality enriched his life with the charm of a wide circle of personal friendships. He was a fluent speaker in both the Creek and English languages. He was well read in the classics, was familiar with the standard philosophical writers, kept abreast of the development of thought, progress and literature and modestly with a soft pleasing voice and excellent diction, could discourse entertainingly by the hour on a wide range of subjects.

Pleasant Porter was a natural born leader of men. This leadership was of the tolerant and generous type. He dealt sympathetically with the misguided conservative members of the tribe and reverenced their every conscientious difference of thought. The full blood Indian of that period was disposed to face the past. The stage of his aboriginal life of simplicity, was narrow. He dramatized every situation in which he found himself. General Porter was patient toward the warlike excesses of these people and employed few measures of coercion. Dignity and firmness characterized his posture toward them. He permitted no infraction to weigh against his higher obligation to serve his people and sought to inspire them with the thought that human relationships rest upon faith and confidence. The numerous uprisings among the emotional full blood members of the tribe, were quelled by unrepressive measures. It was by moral suasion, that he influenced them to abandon the paths of internecive strife. To him, it would seem, fate had committed the task of leading a race from archaic rites and primitive violence forth into the clear sunlight of Christian civilization. He easily ranks as one of the most distingushed and influential Indian leaders of all time.

It was his ambition that his people might assume their place as full participants in the glory of United States citizenship. His last efforts were directed toward seeing them invested with the high privileges of statehood and self government. His dream in that behalf was approaching realization. When death closed the eventful service of General Pleasant Porter at Vinita, on September 3, 1907, statehood for his people stood at the threshold.[6] He rests in the old family burying ground at Wealaka.

[6]On September 2, 1907, Gen. Porter accompanied by Judge John R. Thomas and M. L. Mott, Creek National Attorney, left Muskogee for Missouri, to attend to some matters of litigation connected with tribal affairs. The party arrived at Vinita in the evening where a change of trains was to be effected and, during the interim, rooms were taken at the Cobb Hotel. Early in the evening, feeling somewhat indisposed, the General with Mr. Mott, retired to his room. He suffered a stroke shortly thereafter, lapsed into unconsciousness and passed away on the morning of Septmeber 3. Realizing the approach of death, he said to those about him, "I'm not afraid to die." These were his parting words before he passed into a state of coma from which he never recovered.

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CHITTO HARJO

At the annual meeting of the Oklahoma Historical Society, held at Okmulgee May 10th and 11th, a number of historical sketches, or they may be termed essays, written by students of the Okmulgee public schools, were presented to the Society. These sketches pertained to the history and traditions of the Creek, or Muskogee tribe of Indians. The subject was very appropriate as the annual meeting was being held in the capital of the old Creek Nation and in the capitol building. The students of the Okmulgee schools have made a study of their local history and have had the advantage of much of the original source information.

These students are to be commended for their good work in compiling the history and traditions of their own part of the State and helping to preserve the historical events as well as the folklore of the Creek people. All these students' essays are filed in the archives of the Oklahoma Historical Society and will be available to research workers.

The society voted to have published in the *Chronicles* the following biographical sketch of Chitto Harjo, better known as Crazy Snake written by Mace Davis, a student of the 12th grade.

—Editor.

Chitto Harjo, popularly known as Crazy Snake, expressed the philosophy of his life when he said that he would not mind so much playing the white man's game if only the white man would not make all the rules. He thus summed up, perhaps unconsciously, the long losing fight he had waged against tremendous odds. He had tried to play the red man's game, but the white man was the referee and changed the rules as often as was expedient. Indomitable of will, firm and unchanging of purpose, Harjo stood firmly but unsuccessfully against the resistlessly inrolling tide of white immigration. It was a final conflict between two civilizations: one powerful with all the massed-up strength of generations, and with land hungry hordes following up and even preceding the conquests of the government; the other was few in numbers, lacking the resources and solidness of a civilized state, and possessing land and homes only at the sufferance of the white man. There could

be but one issue to such a conflict, but that great Indian, although half-knowing that the fate of the red man was written, followed in the way of his forefathers in defiance of the law of the white man.

Chitto Harjo was born about the year 1854 in Creek Indian Territory, now a part of Oklahoma. Nothing is known of his early life except that he was a follower of Isparhecker, who was the leader of the federal element among the Creeks during the Civil War. Harjo showed promise of leadership and gained prominence in a tribal disturbance called the Green Peach War.

In 1892 the long feared spectre of division of tribal lands took tangible form when Congress created the Dawes Commission for the purpose of inducing the Indians to agree to allotment of lands. Harjo at once became the acknowledged leader of the dissenting faction. As a member of the House of Kings he continually warned his people that allotment of lands would lead to the final step in the white man's dominance over the Indian. He foresaw with the utmost clarity that to break up the old communal system of land ownership by alloting a quarter-section to each Indian would be to crumble the foundation of tribal unity and government. He was a prophet, at once denouncing his people for straying from the way of their forefathers and warning them that the destruction of the Creek nation was imminent.

Harjo's followers were mostly fullbloods, but at a later time many negroes of part Indian blood were admitted into the Snake faction. As Harjo is most widely known as Crazy Snake, and his followers were designated as Snakes, it would be well to explain whence the term came. Chitto is a Creek word meaning snake, and Harjo signifies one who is brave beyond discretion, foolhardy, or in a loose sense, crazy. Thus Chitto Harjo became known to the whites as Crazy Snake.

In general, the half-breeds and intermarried citizens of the Creek nation favored the allotment of lands. Many of them already owned fine farms, and all of them expected to gain if the white man's civilization supplanted the old communal system of tribal ownership. About one-third of the Creeks, counting the Negroes, were followers of Harjo. Between his group actively opposing allotments and the mixed-bloods who supported it was

a large group who were either half-willing to take allotments or could easily be coerced.

Thus, on one side were ranged the more progressive and better educated mixed-bloods, the eager land agents and promoters, the ego-centric type of community boosters, and the great federal government. On the other side and opposing this group stood Crazy Snake and his little band of about 5,000 followers. They were ignorant, poor, and only half realized the vast forces arrayed against them. They knew nothing but that they desired to be left alone to live as they saw fit on the land which

the Great White Father at Washington had promised to them and their children as long as grass shall grow and water flow.

Harjo is known to many as a stubborn old Snake with more "courage to defy the powerful makers of his fate" than intellect and reasoning power. But there is every reason to believe that he possessed great native intelligence. The most serious charge against him is that he was a cross-grained malcontent, standing stubbornly in the way of progress. Apart from the malcontent side of it (though he had great reason to be so), the question as to whether or not he stood in the way of progress is a delicate one. Most certainly he was a hindrance to our Western civilization, but it is not so certain that he was a hindrance to real progress. It is difficult to believe that, behind that broad forehead there was not a thing more than mulish obstinacy, that behind that piercing eye there was not a keen intelligence that had thrust through into the heart of the question. I will expound what I believe to have been Harjo's guiding star and principles of action in opposing our Western civilization.

The progress of civilization, as Harjo saw it, meant that treaties would be made and kept only as long as was profitable, and broken when expedient. In no instance, he saw, were the solemn promises sworn on the honor of the United States allowed to stand for long in the way of "progress." To him the white man's civilization was superior to the Indians only in that the young braves multiplied like flies and were given great power to break the promises of their fathers and take the land of the Indian. He could not know that true civilization does not entail the looting of lands and property from uncivilized people. He did not know, as he

said before the Senate Committee at Tulsa, that the white man had come to the Indian saying he knew the road that leads to light, and that he was willing to show the Indian this road that the red man might know the blessing of civilization and gain the light. Harjo also knew that the white man himself had not found the light, for his civilization was one of sordid greed.

Over against this, the progress of civilization, stood the simple tribal life he was fighting for. For him the block of allotment plans meant surcease from the continual inroads of the white man. It meant that the Indian would be left in peace to raise his little patches of corn and beans, to hunt and fish, and to keep alive the old customs and traditions. He knew that to place each Indian on a quarter-section as an independent farmer would be to place him on the same economic basis with the white man, who with generations of sustained effort behind him and with his greater skill in tilling the soil, could easily outstrip the Indian in production. Thus the Indian would lose first his government and tribal citizenship, then his lands, and finally his very identity as the conquering race swallowed him up. So on these principles and for these reasons did Chitto Harjo oppose the allocation of Creek lands.

Following close on the work of the Dawes Commission came the Curtis Act. This act, passed in 1898, abolished tribal laws and courts, thus fulfilling the fears of Crazy Snake. Matters came quickly to a head. In 1900 the Creek nation agreed to allot its

lands, thereby consenting to the Curtis Act. Crazy Snake realized that immediate action must be taken if the identity of the Creek nation was to be preserved.

His following among the full-bloods had held together with remarkable tenacity against all the forces working to destroy their unity. With implicit confidence in their leader, they supported his attempt to establish them on a separate political status. In 1901 they proclaimed him their hereditary chief. Harjo at once called a national council of the House of Kings and the House of Warriors at Hickory Ground, six miles from Henryetta. The council proclaimed the reestablishment of the ancient laws and courts acknowledged by the United States in the treaty of 1825. In so doing they challenged the authority of the United States to dissolve the government of another nation, and appealed to the sanctity of treaties.

It has been said that the move was ill-advised. Perhaps it was, but only in that it was unwise for the Indian to hope that the United States would be bound by a treaty which it would break at pleasure. If their attempt to preserve their identity as a nation was ill-advised, then so are all such attempts. It was a desperate effort, but the situation was desperate.

Crazy Snake proclaimed Hickory Ground the capitol of Creek nation instead of Okmulgee. Laws were passed forbidding Creek Indians to employ white labor or to rent lands to whites. A body of light horsemen was organized to enforce the laws. A detachment of them rode into Eufaula and posted a warning to the effect that any Indian renting lands to whites would be fined $100 and given 50 lashes on the back and that all improvements on Indian lands made by whites were to be confiscated.

Wild rumors began to be circulated concerning the activities of the Snake Indians. One was that six hundred Creeks were about to descend on Bristow. It was reported that members of the Snake faction were roving over the whole nation threatening and whipping those who accepted allotments. There is no doubt that there is some truth in this last, but it has been stated by Creek Indians (Mr. Sam Haines and Mr. Johnson Tiger) now living, there was no widespread violences and that Crazy Snake was not overbearing.

The extent of Crazy Snake's measures to expel the white man were no more threatening than those experienced by Mr. George Riley Hall of Henryetta.

Mr. Hall and his brother had rented a farm from a Creek Indian near the Hickory Grounds. They had made considerable outlay on it in time, labor, and money. One evening a Snake Indian named Chowela, accompanied by a light horseman and an interpreter, came to the farm and told Mr. Hall he would have to leave at once. Hall attempted to parley, saying he would lose heavily if he abandoned the farm. Chowela replied they would have to leave regardless, and at once. Then Mr. Hall said he was a citizen of the United States, and would leave only when he was ordered to do so by the federal court at Muskogee. Chowela angrily replied that if he thought he could remain in defiance of the Snake Indian government, he could try.

militia to defend their homes. Newspapers all over the world proclaimed that hundreds of fully armed Indians were on the war-path.

On receiving orders from Governor Haskell, Colonel Roy Hoffman called out five companies of militia, and martial law was declared in the Hickory Ground country. The militia found no armed resistance, nor any evidence of a Snake uprising, for the full-bloods were in their hill country homes.

Meanwhile, Sheriff Odom had secured a warrant for the arrest of Crazy Snake, whom he considered to be the cause of the trouble. The old Snake at this time lived in McIntosh County at the base of Tiger Mountain. The sheriff and several deputies went there to arrest him. They fired at him without warning. Crazy Snake was shot in the hip, and Charles Coker, his lieutenant, was shot through the chest. Coker killed two of the deputies, and with his chief escaped.

With the aid of Daniel Bob, an old Choctaw friend of Crazy Snake's, the two of them traveled by secret routes to the Choctaw country.

Chitto Harjo lived with his friend, Daniel Bob, for the last few years of his life. He died, in distress from the gunshot wound, on April 11, 1911.

Muscogee News Paper Articles

Office of the Principal Chief...

by P.D. Ellis

Hello again tribal citizens and friends. Many things are happening in our Nation these days. Contrary to some people's views, our progress is moving forward rapidly. Some time ago we were notified by the tribe's auditing firm that the Creek Nation is 35 million dollars richer now than it was this time last year. This is probably due to total assets.

On August 14 we conducted the first annual Church Leader's summit meeting in the Mound building. Approximately 125 people were present and communications between tribal government and leaders of church was very informative. We are on the fast tract to develop the 40 acre industrial park across from McCoy's Lumber. The City of Okmulgee has agreed to furnish all utilities, etc. I believe **Mr. Ben Chaney** and his new transit system will be our first tenant. I keep stressing for jobs and jobs for our people and this industrial site will surely help.

Another new endeavor of this administration is to take the government to the people. I just left a meeting of the Coweta Clinic project. This week they are drilling test holes for building and street construction.

Also this week, holes are being drilled for the new Tulsa Casino project. The Endangered Species Act has a huge impact on our construction. A beetle that lives underground, a bald eagle habitat and a few more obstacles but we will keep pushing forward.

A big thanks to Trade and Commerce Authority for receiving a Best Business Award from the Oklahoma Indian Chamber of Commerce and Oklahoma Business Development, a department of Commerce entity. Good work.

Many people have asked why I don't come to the communities anymore as I did as Second Chief. I am really completely covered up with work on a national level. My meeting continuously involving state, national and tribal leaders doing what is best for our Nation as a whole. I miss having lunch and visiting with my friends throughout the nation very much.

Also these are always rumor and stories about a new chief. I've witnessed it for 13 years but never had to endure until this year. I want to assure the creek citizens that rumors are probably started by disgruntled or jealous people who have nothing better to do. We have made many changes and will make many more in the future. Those rumors starters and relayers need prayer's if anything. I assure the Nation that I will never do anything to bring dishonor or disrespect to the office of the Principal Chief.

I will confer with many Senators and Congressman, plus NIGC chairman about gaming, IHS director about health and anything to foster better relationships for our Nation.

Looking forward to the many creek people who will be joining us at the opening of the Museum of American Indians in Washington D.C.

For now good health and good future to all people of this Nation. *Mvto.*

Quote of the month: *If you want the rainbow, you have to put up with the rain.*

Second opinion

by Second Chief Alfred Berryhill

Henks Ce Vmestvlke. I recently met with a couple of ministers from Hawaii. They came to Oklahoma to visit with some of their people who are Hawaiian inmates in prison in Oklahoma. They sang some some spiritual songs of Hawaiian or Polynesian ancestry. When you think about these people, they must also have a rich heritage. Sometimes you see these people on TV in their long boats with several men with oars. We call our boats, ships, canoes, etc. piros (pith-thoes). Since we lived near the Creeks, our people should have some knowledge about canoeing. We use the word pirntvmkv to mean airplane. That word translates into flying boat.

Our trade and commerce relied on the availability of waterways and shipment was made by piros. War parties were sent out by piros. When our prophets made prophecies, they told of people flying in the belly of birds, people crossing our prairies traveling inside of turtles and people traveling about in snakes. What ever became of our prophets (o-wa-lvs)? There is a saying that without vision, a nation dies. We are in the process of doing things with the Hanna Project and it seems we have done something wrong and we have a hold on our project. Before our trade and commerce took over the farms and natural resources, these lands were being leased for around $7 to $8 an acre. The lessee would make a great profit and none of these monies returned back to the Tribe that amounted to several hundred thousand dollars and they were released for hunting and we received no monies in return. Now we are developing these lands and all proceeds will be made by our own organization including training and employment. But, since we as Indians are going to be doing it, we are under scrutiny, but the non-Indian lessees were free to do what they wanted and all the Tribe received was $7 to $8 an acre.

I hope that in the future, we can all work together and be proactive and not fight among ourselves while other Tribes around us are booming. *Mvto*

Mvskoke History Series
By
Patrick E. Moore

The second Spanish expedition entered the *Mvskoke Confederacy* during 1539. Hernando de Soto, after looting the Central and South American Aztec, Mayan and Inca Nations turned his treasure seeking attention to North America. He sailed, May 18, 1539, from Havana, Cuba, landing close to what is now Tampa Bay, Florida. On the beach he discovered a fellow Spaniard, Juan Ortiz, who had been a member of an 1528 Spanish expedition, the first Spanish expedition into the southeast. Ortiz had been captured by local Native Americans, treated with courtesy, and subsequently released to live as he pleased. Ortiz was fluent in the local languages and De Soto ordered him to be the expedition's interpreter.

De Soto began his march inland with 600 fully armed Spanish soldiers, 220 mounted on Andalusian horses, 100 servants, including blacksmiths, and numerous slaves. The expedition also traveled with a herd of hogs, some mules and 100 specially bred man-hunting war dogs. The blacksmiths had neck chains to control several hundred slaves they hoped to capture. When local Native Americans did not cooperate with De Soto, he burned villages and executed the inhabitants. The expedition encountered strong native military resistance, as word of De Soto's brutality rapidly preceded his army.

When he moved into what is now Georgia, he encountered well organized resistance and ingenious forts that made his progress very difficult. De Soto was attacked at every river crossing and was virtually under siege by the *Mvskoke Confederacy* 24 hours a day.

He wintered in December 1539 north of the last swamp, but the relentless native assaults continued daily and his command lost one soldier a day.

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Housing Authority offers various housing programs

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Creek weightlifter breaks state highschool record

• Story page 16

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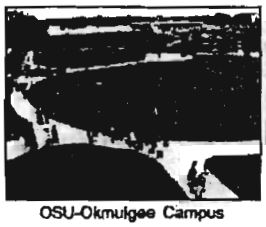
OSU System, Okmulgee Campus, and Tribal leaders present funding request to Oklahoma Congressional team

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A team of leaders representing the Oklahoma State University System, the OSU-Okmulgee campus, and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation recently visited the National Capitol to present a funding request of $10 million to provide planning, equipment, and start-up costs for the tribal college proposed by the Five Civilized Tribes and the OSU System last fall.



OSU-Okmulgee Campus

After meeting with the congressional team, the group, along with Governor Brad Henry and other VIP's from the state, participated in a ceremony honoring Carl Albert, former Speaker of the U.S. Congress.

The OSU System and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation are partnering to establish and operate a comprehensive Tribal College/University on the OSU-Okmulgee Campus. This partnership will provide comprehensive services to Native American in a culturally sensitive setting. In addition to education services, a state-of-the-art health care service and research center for Native Americans is being proposed, with participation by the OSU Health Services Center. The Muscogee Nation and the OSU System are equally committed to this endeavor.

Representing the tribe was Speaker of the National Council, Thomas Yahola and Tribal Attorney General, Montie Deer who represented Chief Ellis. The OSU System was represented by: President & CEO Dr. David Schmidly; OSU-Okmulgee President Dr. Bob Klabenes; OSU-Okmulgee Health and Environmental Technology Division Chair, Jerry Wilson; and Planning Consultant, Dr. James King.

Oklahoma State Representative Brad Carson expressed a strong interest in the project, recognizing the need to bring new education, health, and economic opportunities to Eastern Oklahoma.

Original Allottee passes away at the age of 101

Original Allottee California "Kelly" Fixico passed away Sunday, April 11 at Valley View Regional Hospital at the age of 101. Services were held Thursday, April 15, at Tukvpvtce Church with Rev. Malcolm Tiger officiating. He was born June 2, 1902 to Lucy Kernal and Kano [Cano] Fixico on his allotment which was located west of Paden. He attended school in the Paden area until enrolling at Nuyaka Mission. He later attended Haskell Industrial Labor Institute in Lawrence, Kan. He excelled in football and baseball. He met his wife, Winey Yahola, in the Holdenville area and they married on May 28, 1942. They made their home on her grandmother's (Wysie Deere) allotment — on which old Tukvpvtce Etvlwv is located. California belonged to the Beaver Clan. Both of his parents belonged to Little River Tulsa Tribal Town. His maternal grandparents are Mary Kernal McCulla and Peter Kernal. Selusky Bear and Nokos Fixico are his paternal grandparents.

Martha Berryhill is the only remaining original allottee alive. This year's festival is honoring the original allottees.

Preservation Office Information

A Short History Of the Muscogee People

Developed by: The Mvscogee (Creek) Nation
Office of Cultural and Historic Preservation

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION

The Muscogee (Creek) people are descendants of a highly evolved culture that, before 1500 AD, spanned all of the region known today as the Southeastern United States. Early ancestors of the Muscogee constructed magnificent earthen pyramids along the rivers of that region as part of their elaborate ceremonial complexes. The historic Muscogee later built expansive towns within these same broad river valleys in the present states of Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee and South Carolina.

The Muscogee were not one tribe but a union of several. This union evolved into a confederacy that, in the Euro-American described "historic period", was the most sophisticated political organization north of Mexico. Member tribes were called tribal towns. Within this political structure, each tribal town maintained political autonomy and distinct land holdings.

The confederacy was dynamic in its capacity to expand. New Tribal towns were born of "Mother Towns" as populations increased. The confederation was also expanded by the addition of tribes conquered by towns of the confederacy, and, in time, by the incorporation of tribes and fragments of tribes devastated by the European imperial powers. Within this confederacy, the language and the culture of the founding tribal towns became dominant.

Throughout the period of contact with Europeans, most of the Muscogee population was concentrated into two geographical areas. The English called the Muscogee peoples occupying the towns on the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers, Upper Creeks, and those to the southeast, on the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers, the Lower Creeks. The distinction was purely geographical. Due in part by intermarriage and its consequent impact on their political and social order. The Upper towns remained less effected by European influences and continued to maintain distinctly traditional political and social institutions.

In the early 19th century, the United States Indian policy focused on the removal of the Muscogee and the other Southeastern tribes to areas beyond the Mississippi. In the removal treaty of 1832, Muscogee leadership exchanged to last of the cherished Muscogee ancestral homelands for new lands in Indian Territory. Many of the Lower Muscogee (Creek) had settled in the new homeland after the treaty of Washington in 1827. But for the majority of Muscogee people, the process of severing ties to a land they felt so much an impossible. The U. S. Army enforced the removal of over 20,000 Muscogee (Creek) to Indian Territory in 1836-1837.

In the new nation the Lower Muscogee located their farms and plantations on the Arkansas and Verdigris Rivers. The Upper Muscogee re-established their ancient towns on the Canadian River and its northern branches. The tribal towns of both groups continued to send representatives to a National Council which met near High Springs. The Muscogee Nation as a whole began to experience a new prosperity.

The American Civil War was disastrous for the Muscogee people. The first three battles of the war in "Indian Territory occurred when confederate forces attacked a large group of neutral Muscogee (Creek) led by Opothle Yahola. For the majority of the Muscogee citizens fought on both the Union and Confederate sides. The reconstruction treaty of 1866 required the cession of 3.2 million acres approximately half of the Muscogee domain.

In 1867 the Muscogee people adopted a written constitution that provided for a Principal Chief and a Second Chief, a judicial branch, and a bicameral legislature composed of a House of Kings and a House of Warriors. Representation in both houses of this Legislative assembly was determined by tribal town. This "Constitutional" period lasted for the remainder of the 19th century. A new capital was established in 1867 on the Deep Fork of the Canadian at Oknulgee.

In the late 1880's the Dawes Commission began negotiating with the Muscogee Nation for the allotment of the national domain. In 1898 the United States Congress passed the Curtis Act which made the dismantling of the National governments of the Five Civilized Tribes and the allotment of collectively held tribal domains inevitable. In 1900, the noted statesman Chitto Harjo helped lead organized opposition to the dissolution of the Muscogee National government and allotment of collectively held lands. It his efforts he epitomized the view of all Muscogee people that they possessed an inherent right to govern themselves. For individuals like Chitto Harjo it was unimaginable that the Nation could be dissolved by the action of a foreign government. This perception proved to be correct.

The end of the Muscogee Nation as envisioned by its architects within the United States Congress did not occur. In the early 20th century the process of allotment of the National domain to individual citizens was completed. However, the perceived dismantling of the Muscogee government was never fully executed. The Nation maintained a Principal Chief throughout this stormy period, until a revitalization of the National government in the 1970's.

In 1971 the Muscogee people, for the first time since the partial dismantling of their National government, freely elected a Principal Chief without Presidential approval. In the decade of the 1970's the leadership of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation drafted and adopted a new constitution, revitalized the National Council, and began the challenging process of political and economic development. In the 1980's a series of United States Supreme Court decisions affirmed the National's sovereign rights to maintain a National Court system and levy taxes. The federal courts have also consistently re-affirmed the Muscogee Nation's freedom from state jurisdiction.

In the 1990's, almost 100 years after the dark days of the allotment era, the Muscogee (Creek) people are actively engaged in the process of accepting and asserting the rights and responsibilities of a sovereign nation. As a culturally distinct people the Muscogee are also aware of the necessity for knowing and understanding their extraordinary historical and cultural heritage.

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

AGRICULTURE

By the time of first contact, the Mvskogean people had developed a highly integrated system of hunting, gathering, and farming. Each of these activities was a communal effort. All individuals within a tribal town were responsible for some portion of the food getting. Older boys and men were responsible for hunting and fishing, while women and girls were responsible for gathering and tending the gardens. Small children and the elderly helped to the best of their abilities. This way, food belonged to the entire community and everyone was fed.

Mvskogean people had been cultivating bottle gourds and squash since approximately 1000BC. Squash was an important food source, while the gourds were used as water vessels, ladles, cups, bowls, rattles, and masks. By AD 200, the Creek were cultivating a variety of wild seed crops. After AD 800, "modern' domesticated corn and beans were common throughout the Southeast.

Methods of getting food varied according to the yearly cycle. Winter was considered the most important hunting season, while fishing was most productive during the spring. The first corps were planted during the spring, tended throughout the summer, and harvested before the coming of fall.

Gathering was important year round, but also followed a seasonal cycle. Spring and summer pickings included wild grapes, blackberries, mulberries, strawberries, apples, and plums. By fall, chestnuts, pecans, hickory nuts, black walnuts, and acorns were ready for gathering. Sunflower seeds were also easy to harvest and store for winter.

Contrary to theories, which trace North American seed crops for a South American source, it is now known that the Southeast was a separate center of domestication. Wild gourds, sunflowers, and seed plants such as marsh elder and chenopod, were among the first southeastern staple crops. "modern" corn, or maize, arrived from Mexico around 200 AD. It quickly became the most important vegetable food in the Creek diet, as they learned to prepare it in many ways and utilize it in dozens of unique dishes.

CLANS

While families include people who are directly related to each other, CLANS are composed of all people who are descendants of the same ancestral clan grouping. Each person belongs to the clan of his or her mother, who belongs to the clan of her mother. This is called matrilineal descent. Fathers are important within the family system; but within the clan, it is the mother's brother (the mother's nearest blood relation) who functions as the primary disciplinarian and role model. Clan members do not claim

"blood relation", but consider each other family due to their membership in the same clan. The same titles are used for both family and clan relations. For example, clan members of approximately the same age consider each other as Brother and Sister, even if they have never met before.

Clan ties are strong. They have served as a traditional bond, which continues to unite and empower Creek people even today. The clan system adds structure to society by influencing marriage choices, personal friendships, and political and economic partnerships. It is traditionally considered a serious offense to kill or eat one's own clan animal.

CLOTHING

Early Mvskogean peoples wore clothing made of woven plant materials or animal skins, depending on the climate. During the summer, they preferred lightweight fabrics woven from tree bark, grasses, or reeds. During the harsh winters, animal skins and fur were used for their warmth.

During the 1600's, the influence of European fashion became apparent in Creek clothing styles. Cloth was more comfortable and colorful than buckskin, and quickly became a popular trade item throughout the Southeast. Bolts of cloth could be obtained in a variety of patterns and textures, and allowed an individualized style of dress to evolve. Many Creeks were soon using the trader' novelties and trinkets such as bells, ribbons, beads, and pieces of mirror.

Men began wearing ruffled cloth shirts and jackets, with buckskin leggings. Mens shirts were gathered at the waist by a beaded and tasseled sash. Another woven band was worn across the chest or over one shoulder, and held a decorative tobacco pouch.

Women began wearing cloth dresses and deep-pocketed aprons. They decorated these ruffled dresses with ribbon, and glass and silver trade beads. In their hair they wore silver brooches and colored silk ribbons whish hung almost to the ground. Men and women both wore soft deerskin moccasins. These too were decorated, often quite elaborately, with beadwork designs.

Different styles of dress were worn on different occasions. During the ball games, men wore only a breechcloth. These games were very fast paced and extra clothing would only have inhibited movement. During the Green Corn Ceremony, women participated in a special Ribbon Dance. For this special occasion, women wore beautiful dresses covered with flowing ribbons. During today's ceremonies, women still wear their traditional ribbon dresses. Men, however, have now adapted the boots, jeans, and fitted shirt common throughout the west.

EARLY HISTORY

According to most traditional legends, the Creek people were born from the navel of the earth, located somewhere within the Rocky Mountains. After a time the Earth became angry, opening up and trying to swallow them back again. They left this land and began to travel towards the rising sun. Their journey let them to the Southeastern region of the United States where they flourished and created complex social structures to govern themselves. The people of the Creek Confederacy were first "encountered" by Europeans during the late 1500's.

According to accounts by early explorers and contemporary archaeologists, the Southeastern Indians had by far the richest culture north of Mexico. Daily life was full of magic and mystery, but the importance of ritual was tempered by an equally strong belief in reason and justice. Harmony and balance have always been two very important concepts among the Creek. They are exemplified even within the earliest social structures as the Creek people combined work and play, religion and politics, and respect for nature as both a teach and supplier of needs.

FAMILIES

Within Creek society, a person is a member of both a *FAMILY* and a *CLAN*. The Creek family is an "extended" one, including more people that the typical "nuclear" family. Each Creek household traditionally consisted of a mother and father, their children (daughters and unmarried sons), the husbands of married daughters, grand children, and grandparents or other elders (from the mother's side). This is called a Matriarchal pattern-female relative stay together and men marry into the household, while sons move away to the household of their wife.

Traditional roles and responsibilities of family members were not unlike those of most tribal or village cultures. Men primarily hunted, acted as disciplinarians, held council meetings, and conducted religious ceremonies. Women primarily gathered and prepared food, conducted household activities, and acted as family caregivers. All members of the family supervised education, each playing a part in teaching children the skills and values necessary for becoming a whole and balanced person.

Today, Creek men and women share many of the responsibilities that were once gender specific. Both are responsible for getting food, caring for children, and acting as disciplinarians. Among traditional Creeks, however, there is still a division of responsibilities during ceremonial activities. Women are excluded from all activities except that which involve women only. The Creek family is still an "extended" one, with strong kinship ties between all blood and clan relations. Family members still function as the primary educators of Creek children, especially concerning aspects of tradition, values, and beliefs.

GREEN CORN CEREMONY

The Green corn Ceremony is a celebration of the new corn and the New Year. It is a time of forgiveness and purification for both the ceremonial grounds and the Creek people. Old ways are cast aside as the new year marks a fresh start and new beginning. Every aspect of the ceremony is in some way symbolic of the purification and cleansing that is taking place.

The name of this ceremony refers to its connection with the annual harvest of the New (Green) Corn. This ripening and harvest usually occurs during July or August, and none is eaten before this time. Such thanksgiving and cerebration of a single crop is not unusual considering its traditional importance. Corn was by far the most dependable food source as it produced even when other crops failed or hunting was unsuccessful. Corn could be prepared in a variety of ways and could be used in numerous dishes. Even today corn remains a primary food source, because of both its nutritional value and traditional symbolism.

The ceremony is also referred to as the "*Posketv*" or Busk which means "to fast". Fasting occurs in two ways; first as the community abstains from eating all new corn until the harvest celebration marked by the Green Corn, an second as participants abstain from all food and consume only a traditional herbal drink, a powerful emetic which serves to cleanse the body both physically and spiritually. According to traditionalists, the purpose of this medicine is to purify the people, so that they will be in an acceptable mental and physical state to receive the blessings of the new year.

Purification is the major them of the ceremony, and participants are expected to lay aside ill feelings forgive wrongs done to them, and forget the conflicts of the previous year. It is the Creek belief that all people should act with the kind of honest motivation, which can only come from a pure heart and mind. By designating this time for cleansing, they ensure such purity for another year, and celebrate life as their ancestors have for thousands of years.

NATURE

All Southeastern tribes possess a rich and complex tradition of looking to nature for guidance and inspiration. The Creek have long been recognized as astute observers of the natural world. Every aspect of their environment, from basic botany to astronomy, was at some point studied and explained. All of creation was viewed as a web, an interwoven network of existence. Each creature was in some way inter-related with other creations, and none could exist alone.

Like other living beings, animals were viewed as having unique abilities ad characteristics, which determined their purpose in life. Some animals, such as wolves and owls, were believed to possess extraordinary powers, which could be used to benefit

or punish human beings, depending on how they had been treated. Other animals, such as the turtle, were used as ceremonial symbols because of their special abilities.

The cycle of life could also be observed in all plants and animals. By noticing changes in their environment, the Creek learned when to hunt, when to plant, and when to begin building shelters for the winter. By studying the world around them, they learned where to find water, how to forecast the weather, and what plants were good to eat. Nature was, and is, a great teacher. Traditionalists say that most people have simply forgotten how to observe.

The ability to forecast the weather was a great asset to the Creek people, as they lived so closely with the land. Only by preparing for inclement weather could they ensure the community's food supply, shelter, and safely. As a result, weather was one of the most studied aspects of nature. Creek men and women observed many signs and omens, which they believed, could help them in predicting the coming weather:

- Geese flying southward indicated the coming of winter, while geese flying northward indicated the return of spring.
- The budding of plants and trees signaled the proper time for planting.
- A flock of sparrows eating off the ground was a sign of cold weather.

Others believed that:

- Water could be found near trees whose branches grew toward the ground.
- Rain was most likely to occur when the moon was only ¼ full.

NUMBER FOUR

The number four was sacred among many of the early Southeastern cultures. Four was viewed as the most natural and harmonious number, a means of division for both time and space. The universe itself consisted of four cardinal directions (which together composed the realm of earthly space). Time was divided according to the four consecutive seasons (which demonstrated the perpetual cycle of birth, growth, death, and rebirth). The number four thus represented the totality of creation.

Beliefs concerning the number four were not superstitious or folklorish; four was not a "lucky" number. All things consisting of four parts were considered to be especially stable and harmonious.
Even domestic activities were sometimes regulated by a concern for this "rightness". House-posts were used in multiples of four (12 or 16) to make Creek dwelling places balanced and stable in both the physical and spiritual worlds. Ceremonial events were usually planned to include four specific activities, be conducted by four primary leaders, or last for a total of four days. Each instance of "four' lent a special air of harmony to life. In this way, aspects of the sacred blended with every day tasks and responsibilities.

TIME

The Mvskoke people did not traditionally recognize seven "days" per "week". Time was measured according to natural phenomena, with "day" meaning the time from one sunrise to another. The next unit of time, similar to week but not exactly like it, was measured by phases of the moon. Approximately 7-8 days pass between each of the four moon phases.

In studying the Mvskoke terms for months and seasons, we are reminded that long before there were words to describe the cycles of nature, such cycles existed and were experienced and adapted to. Among the Mvskoke, changes in climate influenced many aspects of life including what they wore, what foods were available to eat, which animals, could be hunted, and what types of community activities should take place. The appearance and movement of stellar objects generally determined the scheduling of ceremonies.

Months were designate by the completion of moon phases, each complete cycle lasting 28-30 days. Each month was equal to the time, which passed between one full moon and the next. The Mvskoke term for each of these months describes a natural event, which is occurring during that time of the year. During *Ke Hvse* (May) the mulberries ripen, while the first frost is usually during *Ehole* (November).

Sometimes only two seasons were acknowledged: the cold season and the warm seasons. More often however, reference is made to four seasons generally corresponding to Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. There are two primary differences between the Mvskoke and European concepts:

- Traditionally, the Mvskoke year begins with *Hiyuce* (July), the completion of the harvest, and is marked by the Green Corn Ceremony.
- Seasons did not begin and end on specific calendar days. Ex. *Tash'ce* (Spring) began when the days became warmer, the birds began to sing, flowers started growing, and trees became green again. It ended when days became even hotter and berries and fruit began to ripen. (Compare this to current calendars, which designate March 20 to June 21 as "spring".)

TRIBAL TOWNS

Mvskoke people were originally (and remain today) organized by membership in a specific Tribal Town or *Twlwv*. Each *twlwv* acted as both an independent community and a member of the larger "Confederacy" of Mvskoke tribes. Early reports indicated that traditionally only 18 *tvlwv* existed, though this number grew rapidly after European contact. Each town was distinguished as either Red or White (red towns typically addressed issues of war, while white towns were concerned with matters of peace).

Each *twlwv* possessed a "sacred fire" which had been given to them in the beginning, and was kept and rekindled periodically. This fire was considered to be a physical link connecting humankind and the Great Spirit. The fire supplied heat and light for both the households and the community ceremonies, as the sun supplied these things so that all life forms might flourish and continue. For the Mvskoke people, the sun and the sacred fire within the ceremonial ring (paskofv) are the same; both are considered to be male forces and so are parts of the male ritual domain. (The sacred fire is even referred to as poca-grandfather). The fire, like an ancestor or tribal elder, must be treated with respect.

Today there are 16 active ceremonial grounds. Each still maintains a sacred fire, which in many cases was brought from the east during "Removal". The communities associated with these grounds act both independently and as part of Mvskoke (Creek) Nation, and serve many of the same political and spiritual purposes as the original tribal towns.

STORY OF MVSCOGEE FAMILIES

Among Mvscogee people, families have always been very important. Long ago, families had to work very hard just to survive. There were many important jobs to be done, and each family member was responsible for a few daily tasks.

Within traditional Mvscogee society, each person is a member of an extended family. An extended family is one in which more than just parents and children live together. The typical Mvscogee household consists of parents, children, grandparents, and grandchildren.

Each family member had specific roles and responsibilities within their family. This way, the whole family worked together to accomplish goals, and each shared in the successes of their labor. Within early societies, women were primarily responsible for gathering and preparing food, taking care of the housework, and caring for the children and elders. Men primarily hunted, enforced rules, and led public meetings and ceremonies. Elders played very important roles as teachers, advisors, and keepers of Mvscogee traditions.

~~Boys and girls also had very special responsibilities. They were taught from a~~ very early age and to observe nature and to learn from what they saw. It was believed that plants, animals, and all the forces of nature had special lessons to teach, if only people would be still and listen.

Until the age of five, boys and girls shared in all the responsibilities of the daily life. They helped gather, cook, and clean. Older girls were taught to collect nuts and berries, to plant and harvest vegetables, and to prepare the many types of food they gathered. Girls also learned all of the artistic skills necessary for making clothing, pottery, basketry, and household utensils. Older boys were taught the skills and methods required for successful hunting and fishing. They also began to learn about the Mvscogee religion, and began to join in some public ceremonies.

After completing their daily tasks, all family members had time for recreational activities. Evening may have been spent listening to stories, or joining in some type of dancing. Often, stories were told Mvscogee history and traditions. Many tales about animals were also told to discipline children or explain the different forms of life.

Mvscogee people of today still generally live within extended families, although the roles of some family members have changed. Men and women no longer hunt and gather berries, but parents still share in the traditional responsibilities of getting and preparing food. Mvscogee children now go to public schools, but still depend on family members to teach them about traditional values and beliefs.

The Story of Muscogee Games

There are two types of traditional ball games still played by Muscogee men and women. A formal, ceremonial game played only by men is commonly known as East and West game. A more recreational game played between men and women is generally referred to as stickball. In early times, men's ball games are an important part of the annual ceremonial cycle.

During both types of games, men play with two wooden ball sticks. Each is about 3 feet long and has a webbed cup at one end. The ball, usually made of hide, is picked up, carried, and thrown with the cupped ends of these sticks. Men cannot touch the ball and must use only their sticks for throwing and catching. Women catch and throw the ball with their hands.

The East and West game requires two equally numbered teams and an extended playing field with wooded posts at each end. Members of each team attempt to throw or carry the ball to their own goal in order to score points. This game is played with incredible skill and speed, as players rush about to intercept and throw the ball.

Muscogee stickball requires a circular playing area with a single pole (25-30 feet tall) set at its center. The object of this game is to score points by throwing the ball and hitting a carved wooden fish of buffalo skull placed on the top of the pole. The team that first reaches a decided number of points wins the contest.

Stickball is played throughout the spring and summer, while the East and West game is played in the late summer and fall. Many traditional Muscogee ceremonial grounds host their own games. Each ground invites other ceremonial grounds to participate in the competition. These games, and the dances and dinners which accompany them, are important for maintaining unity among all Muscogee people. Excessive violence during these games is not tolerated, and anger and resentment among players is considered to be shameful conduct.

1816 - 1826

1816 – David Mitchell appointed superintendent of Southeastern Indians; first Seminole war ends in defeat of Florida Indians by expedition led by General Andrew Jackson

1817 – Senate Committee on Public Lands recommends Indian Removal Policy; Territory of Alabama created including Upper, and part of Lower, Creek towns

1818 – National Council enacts code of laws entitled "Laws of the Creek Nation"

1819 – Alabama admitted as the 22nd state of the Union; Florida is annexed by U.S.

1821 – Sequoyah completes system for written Cherokee language; U.S. buys Florida from Spain and claims Seminole lands

1822 – Methodist and Baptist missionaries establish schools in Creek Nation but close within ten years as Creeks not receptive

1824 – National Council meets at Tuckabatchee to draft policy statement of further land cessions; "On no account whatever will we consent to sell one foot of our land, neither by exchange or otherwise; this talk is not only to last during the life our present chiefs, but to their descendants after them;" Menawa

1825 – Treaty of Indian Springs at Indian Springs, Georgia; lands in Georgia are exchanged for lands west of the Mississippi in violation of Creek National Law;

"There ought to be the strongest & most solemn assurance the country given them should be theirs as a permanent home for themselves and their posterity, without being disturbed by the encroachments of our cultures." John C. Calhoun, Secretary of War under Monroe

1826 – Treaty of Washington revokes the Treaty of Indian Springs, but essentially restates it

1827 - 1833

1827 – Creeks cede all remaining territory in the U.S. less than a century after they had welcomed Oglethorpe to their towns; area includes all lands in Georgia

1827 – The Cherokee form a system of government modeled after that of the U.S.

Thomas L. McKenney, head of Indian Affairs, travels to Creek Nation; the report to Washington exaggerates and elaborates European American misconceptions about Native Americans

1828 – First group of Creeks are moved out of Alabama; McIntosh party and Lower Creeks move overland and by steamboat to land on the banks of the Arkansas River

1829 – Andrew Jackson is inaugurated 7th President of U.S. with the announced intention of driving the Indians across the Mississippi

1830 – Indian Removal Act is approved by the US Congress despite overriding, vigorous opposition by Native Americans; President Andrew Jackson signs law ordering the removal of the Cherokee to an "Indian Territory" in present-day Oklahoma; Choctaw in Mississippi are first tribe to sign the Removal Treaty

1832 – Creek delegation led by Opothele Yoholo goes to Washington to sign Treaty of Washington; relinquishes all tribal lands east of Mississippi despite continued Creek opposition

1831 – Supreme Court rules in Cherokee Nation vs. Georgia that the Cherokee are not a "foreign nation" within the meaning of the Constitution but only "dependent nation"

1832 – George Catlin, pioneer American ethnologist, goes west to capture looks, customs, and manners of American Indian on canvas

1832 – Chickasaw give up the last of their land; Creeks cede last of their land to U.S.; Seminoles lose all of their land

1833 – The Treaty of Fort Gibson defines the boundaries of Creek Nation

1834 - 1836

1834 – Department of Indian Affairs is established by an act of Congress

1835 – Second Seminole War begins in Florida; Seminole Indians refuse to be evacuated from their land to area west of the Mississippi River; representative of Plains tribes and Five Tribes meet in Creek Territory and sign peace treaty with each other and U.S.

1836 – Chickasaw are removed to Indian Territory; Trail of Tears, Cherokee removal begins; in 1837 & 1838, U.S. Army marches the Cherokee, Creek, Seminole, Chickasaw and Choctaw nations to Indian Territory; thousands of Indians die on this "Trail of Tears"; Roley McIntosh (Arkansas) and Opothele Yoholo (Canadian) govern themselves separately

1840 - 1859

1840 – U.S. census reports that approximately 40,000 Indians from the Five Civilized Nations of the East have been resettled in the Trans-Mississippi west; National Council is re-established at Council Hill at High Spring; a single code of law is adopted

1841 – The Old Texas Road is established through Fishtown and North Fork Town, the first of three great cattle trails

1842 – The Creek hold a Grand Council (intertribal council) at Deep Fork River to establish relationship with several Plains tribes; included were the Upper & Lower Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Seminole, Caddo, Shawnee, Quapaw, Seneca, Pawnee, Osage, Kickapoo, and others

1844 – Koweta Manual Labor and Boarding School is founded by Rev. Robert M. Loughridge

1846 – Tullahassee Mission is founded in Canadian district

1849 – Department of Interior is created as 6th Cabinet post

1852 – Patent in fee simple is granted to Creek Nation for lands in what is now Oklahoma

1855 – National Council takes control of annuities distributed by Tribal officials; office of National Treasurer is created

1859 – A written constitution, in the form of a brief document, is adopted; Moty Canard is elected Principal Chief, Lower Creek; Oktarharsar (Sands) Harjo elected Principal Chief, Upper Creek

1860 - 1875

1861 – Opothele Yoholo and Cherokee John Ross urge adoption of neutrality in the American Civil War

– General Albert Pike draws treaty between the Creek Nation and the Confederacy; Opothele Yoholo leads his neutral followers - Creek and Seminole - to Kansas to join Union forces and seek protection for women and children.

1864 – Col. Chivington attacks Black Kettle's peaceful Cheyenne and Arapaho village and kills 150 men, women, and children in the "Sand Creek Massacre"

1865 – At Fort Smith Peace Conference, U.S. representative treats all Creek as enemies and forces them to sell the western half of the Nation

1866 – 44 tribal towns and 3 black towns are recorded in Creek Nation

1867 – Comanche, Kiowa, Southern Cheyenne and Arapaho sign treaty with the U.S. government at Medicine Lodge, Kansas; Indians are to withdraw and to be established on one great reservation south of the Arkansas River

– National Council convenes at Black Jack Grove; constitution is revised, Samual J. Checote is elected Principal Chief

1868 – George A. Custer attacks the sleeping Cheyenne village; 703 Cheyenne of Black Kettle's killed and women and children are captured; fall regular session of council is held in the new log capital in Okmulgee

1870 – At Okmulgee Convention a plan for an Indian state is adopted; representatives of most nations are addressed by General William Tecumseh Sherman

– The Justice Department is created by an act of Congress

1871 – All Indians become national wards and all Indian treaties are nullified in the Indian Appropriation Act passed in March; the Sands Rebellion, passive resistance to constitutional government, breaks up the annual session of the National Council

1872 – Union Agency for the Five tribes is established at Muskogee; Missouri, Kansas & Texas railroad opens a north-south line along the eastern end of Creek Nation

1875 – Judge Isaac Parker establishes jurisdiction over Indian Territory from Fort Smith; he works for 20 years to bring law and order to the area

1880 - 1899

1881 – Green Peach War, most serious Creek civil war, is a struggle over constitutional power

1882 – Tulsa is founded; the Frisco railroad is extended from Vinita

1884 – Nuyuka Mission, 14 miles west of Okmulgee, is founded by Alice Robertson

1886 – Apache chief Geronimo is captured in Arizona by federal troops commanded by General Miles; last major Indian war ends

1887 – Dawes Severalty Act provides for division of Indian lands among Indian families: 160 acres per family with land to be held in trust by U.S. government for 25 years to prevent exploitation

1889 – Federal government opens the "unassigned lands" in present-day central Oklahoma to white settlement; Indian Territory court is created at Muskogee with jurisdiction over civil and minor criminal cases involving U.S. citizens and others

1889 – The Great Land Rush when the federal government opens "unassigned lands", or present-day central Oklahoma, to European-American settlement on April 2

1890 – 200 unarmed Sioux are massacred by U.S. cavalry at Wounded Knee Creek on December 29

1891 – 900,000 acres of Indian land in Oklahoma is opened for general settlement by a presidential proclamation

– Complete census is ordered by Creek National Council

1893 – Dawes Commission is created to negotiate allotment procedure with Five Tribes

1896 – The last execution is held on grounds of Council House in May and Timmie Jack is executed for murder

1898 – The Curtis Act is established by Congress, requiring mandated allotment and abolishing tribal law and court system, violating the treaty of 1866

1900 - 1979

1900 – Creek delegation goes to Washington to make a new agreement with the Dawes Commission

– Chitto Harjo leads the so-called Snake Indians in an organized resistance to enrollment and allotment

"At that time we had these troubles it was to take my country away from me; I had no other troubles... I could live in peace with all else, but they wanted my country and I was in trouble defending it." -Chitto Harjo

1901 – U.S. marshalls and troops raid Hickory Ground and arrest Chitto Harjo and 94 followers

– Petroleum discovered southwest of Tulsa; members of Five Tribes are declared citizens of the United States

1903 – Pleasant Porter is elected Principal Chief

1904 – The first oil producing well in Okmulgee County is struck, a half mile northwest of the Creek Council House

1905 – The Sequoyah Convention meets at Muskogee; a constitution for a separate state of Sequoyah is drawn up but U.S. Congress ignores this action

1906 – The Five Tribes Act passed by Congress in March so tribal governments cease to exist; an Enabling Act in Congress requires joint statehood of two territories in Oklahoma

1907 – Oklahoma is admitted as 47th state of the Union

1934 – Indian Reorganization Act allows for the reorganization of tribal governments, applicable in all states, except Oklahoma

1937 – Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act, the Thomas Rogers Bill, allows the tribes in the state to reorganize and incorporate the tribal towns; three are federally recognized

1964 – In the Fort Jackson Case, U.S. Supreme Court awards almost $4,000,000 to Creek Nation in payment for lands taken under old treaties

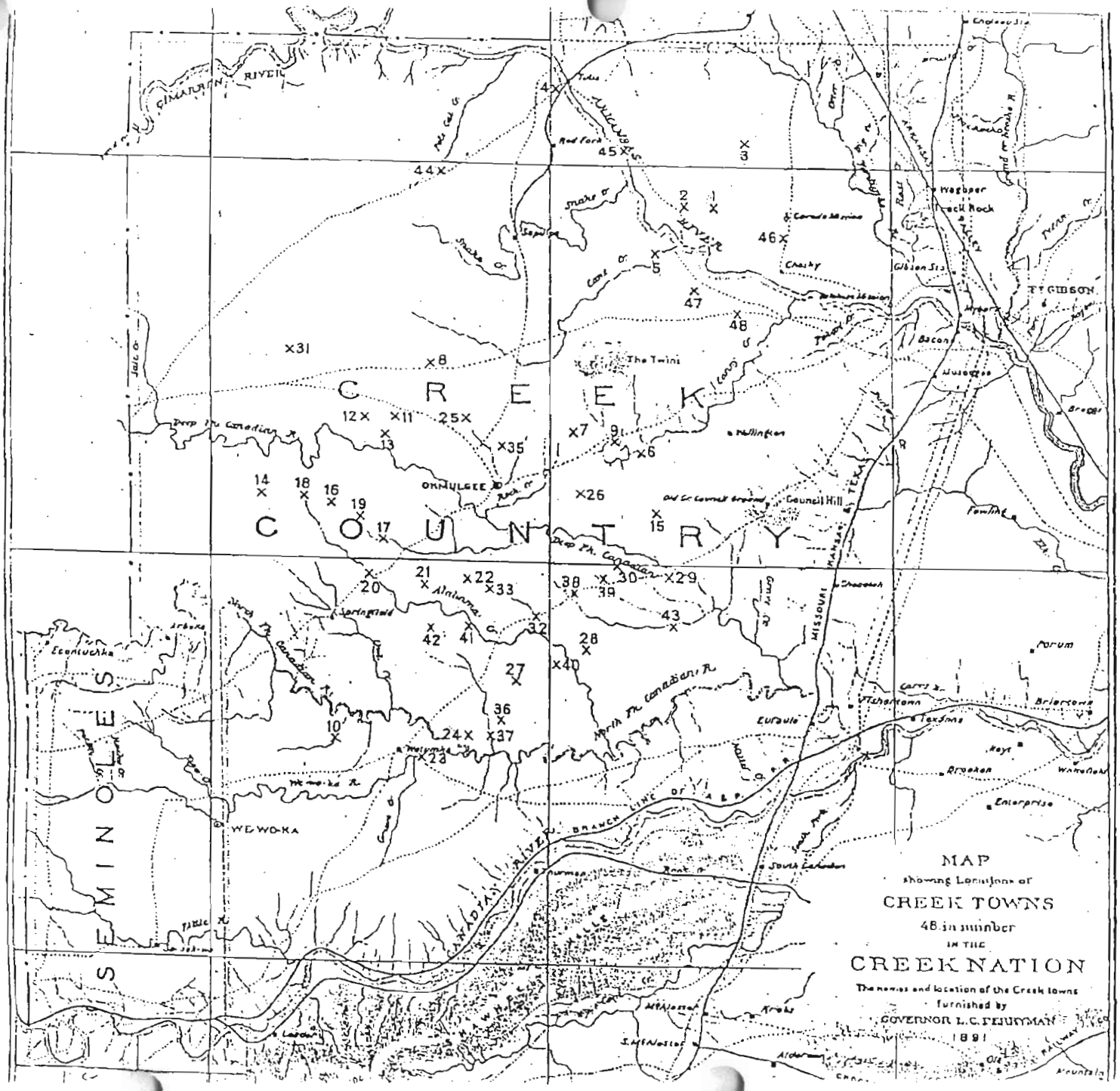
1970 – Congressional Act allows Five Tribes to elect Principal Chiefs

1971 – Claude Cox elected Principal Chief

1976 – Harjo vs. Kleppe, U.S. District Court opinion that Creek National Council is still the legal governing council of the Creek

1979 – New constitution ratified, replaces constitution of 1867

Tribal Towns


CREEK
COUNTRY
SEMINOLE
MAP
showing Location of
CREEK TOWNS
48 in number
IN THE
CREEK NATION
The names and location of the Creek towns
furnished by
GOVERNOR L. C. PERRYMAN
1891
Tribal
TOWNS
1. Coweta.
2. Broken Arrow.
3. Choyaha.
4. Locharpoka.
5. Couchartey.
6. Hechetey.
7. Cussehta.
8. Taskeke.
9. Tulsa (Canadian.)
10. Tulsa (Little River.)
11. Noyarka.
12. Akfaske.
13. Arbekoche.
14. Arbeka.
15. Arbeka. 2nd.
16. Asselarnape or Grunlief.
17. Ouwohka.
18. Tharthoculka or Fish Pond.
19. Tharprakko.
20. Tokebachee.
21. Thewahley.
22. Kialiga.
23. Tokpafka.
24. Talmochassee.
25. Toofula—1.
26. Toofula—2.
27. Pakantalahassee.
28. Hillarbe.
29. Chartarksofka.
30. Kichopatake.
31. Artussee.
32. Tallahossochee.
33. Allabama.
35. Osochee.
36. Oeokofke.
37. Okcharye.
38. Ocheyapofa.
39. Talwathakko.
40. Talartega.
41. Hutschechapa.
42. Quassartey—1.
43. Quassartey—2.
44. Yoochee.
45. Big Spring.
46. Arkansas. Colored. Newly organized.
47. North Fork. Colored. Newly organized.
48. Canadian [illegible]

Tribal Town's Today

Alabama Quassarte Tribal
Chief : Tarpie Yargee
Wetumka, Oklahoma

Kialegee Tribal Town
Mekko: Evelyn Bucktrot
Wetumka, Oklahoma

Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
Mekko: Louis McGertt
Okemah, Oklahoma

Ceremonial Grounds

CEREMONIAL GROUNDS

ALABAMA
Mekko
Bobby Yargee
Wetumka, OK

ARBEKA
Mekko
Raymond Meeley
Henryetta, OK

DUCK CREEK
Mekko
Simon Harry
Hectorville, OK

FISH POND
Mekko
Thomas Mack, Sr.
Cromwell, OK

GREENLEAF
Mekko
Bill Proctor
Dewar, OK

HICKORY GROUND
Mekko
George Thompson, Jr.
Henryetta, OK

HILLABEE
Mekko
Daniel Harjo
Hanna, OK

IRON POST
Mekko
Gary Bucktrot
Gypsy, OK

KELLYVILLE
Mekko
Jim D. Brown, Jr.
Kellyville, OK

MUDDY WATERS
Mekko
Bill Hill
Hanna, OK

NEW TULSA
Mekko
Jeff Fixico
Spaulding, OK

NUYAKA
Mekko
Phillip Deere, Jr.
Nuyaka, OK

OKFUSKEE
Mekko
Barney Harjochee
IXL, OK

PEACH GROUND
Mekko
Roman Hill
Hanna, OK

TALLAHASSEE (WVKOKAYE)
Mekko
David Proctor
Nuyaka, OK

TALLAHASSEE (CROMWELL)
Mekko
Thomas Yahola
Wetumka, OK

Churches

Church Listings

Alabama Indian Baptist
Westside of Weleetka on
Clearview Road

Arbeka Indian Baptist
7101 Loblolly Rd.
Weleetka, Ok 74480

Arbeka United Methodist
205 Farrid Dr.
Earlsboro, OK 74840

Artussee Indian Baptist
HC-63 Box 233-A
Eufaula, OK 74432

Belvin Baptist Church
320 North Mission
Okmulgee, Ok 74447

Bemo Indian Baptist
13315 South 73rd East Ave.
Bixby, Ok 74008

Big Arbor Indian Baptist
P.O. Box 46
Stidham, Ok, 74461

Big Cussetah Indian Meth.
P.O. Box 58
Morris, Ok 74445

Broken Arrow Indian Meth.
20824 East 141st
Broken Arrow, Ok 74014

Buckeye Creek Baptist
P.O. Box 710
Okemah, OK 74859

Butler Creek
Rt. 1 Box 615
Oktaha, Ok 74450

Cedar River Baptist
Rt. 3 Box 59
Holdenville, Ok 74848

Cedar Springs Baptist
P.O. Box 103
Braggs, OK 74432

Chuska United Methodist
Rt. 4 box 624
Bristow, OK 74010

Concharty United Methodist
Rt. 2 Box 3625
Okmulgee, Ok 74447

Creek Chapel Church
P.O. Box 506
Okemah, Ok 74859

Davis Chapel UMC
P.O. Box 282
Coweta, Ok 74429

Deep Fork Hillabee
P.O. Box 929
Checotah, OK 74426

Faith Baptist Church
P.O. Box 353
Dustin, Ok 74839

Faith Tabernacle Church
911 North 10th
Sapulpa, Ok 74066

Fife Memorial UMC
901 East Okmulgee St
Muskogee, Ok 74402

Grace Herkve Baptist
201 North Tiger
Wetumka, Ok 74883

Grave Creek Indian Baptist
P.O. Box 822
Okmulgee, OK 74447

Grant United Meth.
5185 N. 26 Rd.
Beggs, OK 74421

Greenleaf Baptist
2 ½ W., 2/3 Mi. S., Hwy 56
Okemah, Ok 74859

Haikey Chapel UMC
P.O. Box 988
Jenks, Ok 74037

Heritage Full Gospel
619 West Poplar
Holdenville, Ok 74848

Hickory Ground #1
Rt. 2 Box 418
Henryetta, Ok 74447

Hickory Ground #2
11520 N. Harrison Rd.
Shawnee, Ok 74804

High Spring Indian Baptist
P.O. Box 642
Okemah, Ok 74859

Hillabee Indian Baptist
9114 E. Latimer E. Pl.
Tulsa, Ok 74115

Holdenville First Indian Bapt.
119 South Pine
Holdenville, Ok 74848

HVCCE-CVPPV Baptist
Rt.1 Box 60
Weleetka, OK 74880

Indian Fellowship Baptist
6130 S. 58th W. Avenue
Oakhurst, Ok 74050

Jubilee Christian
1019 S. Florida Avenue
Okmulgee, OK 74447

Little Coweta Indian Baptist
HC-62 Box 240
Eufaula, Ok 74432

Little Cussetah Baptist
P.O. Box 1432
Sapulpa, OK 74067

Little Cussetah Meth.
Rt. 3 Box 1555
Okmulgee, OK 74447

Little Quarsarty Baptist
P.O. Box 27
Cromwell, Ok 74829

Many Springs Baptist
P.O. Box 895
Holdenville, Ok 74848

Middle Creek #1 Baptist
Rt. 1 Box 58
Lamar, Ok 74850

Middle Creek #2 Mission Bapt
P.O. Box 294
Holdenville, Ok 74848

Montesoma Indian Baptist
P.O. Box 531
Okemah, OK 74859

Morning Star Ministries
Rt. 2 Box 1943
Mounds, Ok 74047

M.S.W. Indian Baptist Assoc.
8428 Diagnal
Calvin, OK 74531

Muttiloke Methodist
1403 S. Popular
Bristow, Ok 74010

New Arbor Baptist
P.O. Box 862
Eufaula, Ok 74432

Newtown United Meth.
P.O. Box 281
Okmulgee, OK 74447

Nuyaka Indian Baptist
14076 N. 131 st. Rd.
Okmulgee, OK 74447

Okfuskee Baptist Church
P.O. Box 583
Eufaula, OK 74432

Okmulgee Indian Baptist
502 W. Creek Dr.
Okmulgee, Ok 74447

Opportunity Heights
3911 S. 55th W. Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74107

Pecan Grove Methodist
100 S. Burgess
Holdenville, OK 74848

Pickett Chapel United Meth.
17610 S. Hickory St.
Sapulpa, Ok 74066

Prairie Springs Indian Baptist
Joe Smith Pastor
P.O. Box 223
Castle, Ok 74833

Ryal Community Indian
Rt. 2 Box 397
Henryetta, Ok 74437

Salt Creek Indian Baptist
3mi. N., of Wetumka
On the Lake Road

Sand Creek Baptist
P.O. Box 27
Wetumka, OK 74883

Salt Creek United Meth.
324 E. St. Louis
Wetumka, OK 74883

Silver Springs Baptist
Tiger Mt. 9mi. E. of Henryetta

Snake Creek Indian Bapt #1
Rt. Box 305 A
Mounds, OK 74047

Springfield Methodist
603 Garrison Dr.
Norman, OK 73069

Solid Rock Baptist
841 E. 141st
Glenpool, Ok 74033

Tallahassee Indian Methodist
11240 Cella Berryhill Rd.
Okmulgee, OK 74447

Tekopochee Methodist
318 S. Creek
Holdenville, OK 74848

Thewarle Baptist
Rt. 1
Dustin, Ok 74839

Thewarley United Methodist
P.O. Box 537
Holdenville, OK 74848

Thlopthlocco Methodist
Rt. 3 Box 209
Okemah, Ok 74859

Tookparftha Bpatist
P. O. Box 62
Calvin, Ok 74531

Tulmochussee Baptist
Rt. 1
Lamar, Ok 74850

Tuskogee Indian Baptist
P.O. Box 672
Eufaula, Ok 74432

Wekiwa Baptist
P.O. Box 1568
Sand Springs, Ok 74063

Weogufkee Indian Baptist
HC 63 Box 73
Eufaula, OK 74432

West Eufaula Indian Baptist
HC 63 Box 313
Eufaula, OK 74432

Wetumka Indian Baptist
P.O. Box 272
Wetumka, OK 74883

Wewoka Indian Baptist
903 S. Hitchite
Wewoka, Ok 74884

Wewoka Methodist Church
1mi. E., on Hwy 270, 6mi. N.
on Yeager Road
Holdenville, Ok 74848

Yardeka Indian Baptist
P.O. Box 758
Dewar, OK 74431

Yeager United Indian Meth.
520 Thomas Yahola Circle
Wetumka, OK 74883

Springtown United Methodist
PO Box 441
Coweta, OK 74429

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EARLY CREEK MISSIONS

By Roland Hinds

Early Christian mission work among the Creeks in their original homes in Georgia and the territory which later became the State of Alabama was very difficult for a number of reasons. The second war between the United States and Great Britain had only recently terminated in a treaty which left the Creeks, who had been friendly to Great Britain, under the authority of the unfriendly Government of the United States. That Government had forced large land cessions upon the Creeks and was urging the whole people to remove beyond the Mississippi River. The fact that warriors then living in the Creek country had lost relatives in the recent war was of added bitterness because the conflict had assumed the character of a civil war. Furthermore, the probable indignation among the Indians over the growing encroachments of white hunters was instrumental in causing a considerable exodus of Creek hunters to the land beyond the Mississippi River during the period 1815-1830.[1] That the Creeks had had bitter experience with the encroachments of white men upon their territory even before 1825 is evidenced by Article Eight of the treaty under which the Lower Creeks traded their lands for lands in the West.[2] There was, therefore, little to encourage the various interested religious groups who surveyed the frontier for situations where fruitful work might be done.

Only a few years after the war, however, Reverend Cyrus Kingsbury and Reverend Cyrus Byington made an offer to the Creek chiefs to establish schools and to preach to the people.[3]

Their offer was, after consideration, rejected.[4] On December 17, 1819, the Mission Board of the Georgia Baptist Association resolved to attempt to establish a mission in the Creek country.[5] Evidence points to the fact that the Creek country had already been visited by Baptist missionaries, who had made a few converts, but it was not until 1822 that Reverend Lee Compere, of South Carolina, came among the Creeks.[6] Reverend Lee Compere entered into the work at a place called Withington, which was on the Chattahoochee River.

In 1827 a Government appropriation of one thousand dollars was secured by Colonel M'Kinney, United States Indian Agent, for the education of the Creeks.[7] This money was given to the mission schools, as there were no purely Governmental schools.[8] The missions, however, did not prosper among the Creeks because of the troubled condition of the country. Some of the Creeks' negro slaves were severely beaten for attending the services at the missions, and in 1828 or 1829 the station under Compere was abandoned.[9] The Asbury mission of the South Carolina Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, was begun in 1822 under supervision of Reverend William Capers and abandoned in 1830.[10] The Methodist mission had won seventy-one persons by 1829.[11] Yet, briefly as these missions existed, they seem to have sowed the seeds of Christianity among the Creeks, and later at Tuckabatchee, twelve miles above the North Fork in the Creek Nation, Reverend Sidney Dyer found a group of worshipping Christians who claimed their beginning from the period of Creek residence in the South.[12] John Davis and his wife who served as assistants at Ebenezer, a school which was transferred from Georgia to a point near Fort Gibson in 1830,[13] were Creeks who had been converted during the troubled times in the South. They kept the school functioning for two years before a white missionary arrived to take charge.[14]

Ebenezer was first put under the charge of Reverend David Lewis, in 1832.[15] In the same year Isaac McCoy arrived to take up his labors at the mission, and he was present at the formation of the first church, in 1832.[16] This church was known as the Muscogee Baptist Church.[17] A daughter of McIntosh was baptized in 1832.[18] In 1833 a meeting house was built fifteen miles west of Cantonment Gibson and three miles north of the Arkansas River.[19] Lewis gave up his work in 1834,[20] and when Reverend David Rollin arrived, with two lady assistants, they found the church disorganized.[21] The membership was composed then of six white persons, twenty-two Indians, and fifty-four negroes.[22] Nine persons were excluded from the church in 1835.[23]

Soon after the Creeks arrived in the West, two Presbyterian preachers, William Vail and William Montgomery, came over from Union Mission and organized a church.[24] Reverend John Flemming and his wife were sent to the Creeks by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Dr. R. L. Dodge relieved Doctor Weed in 1835.[25]

In 1835 there were three Christian denominations working among the Creek—Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians.[26] In September, 1935, the charges of misconduct brought against the missionaries by Roley McIntosh and other chiefs caused the Creek Agent to order all of them out of the nation.[27] It was alleged that the missionaries preached against slavery,[28] and it was a fact that they received negroes into the churches, some of whom became leaders in the local groups.[29] There is some evidence that white men resident in the Creek Nation influenced the chiefs to make the request for removal of the missionaries.[30] McCoy goes so far as to say that these instigators were two traders and a white man married to a Creek woman.[31] The Creek chiefs, meeting about the last of September at Ebenezer, exonerated Rollin from all the charges brought against him.[32] The opposition which the Creek chiefs generally showed has been attributed to the fear that their authority over the people would be lessened and their ancient customs destroyed by Christianity.[33] Dodge attributed the troubles of the missionaries to the dissensions within the Creek Nation, the unpleasant nature of their relations to the United States, the influence of white men residing near them, and the fact that missionaries of three denominations were laboring in close proximity to each other.[34]

Whatever the motives behind the actions of the Creek chiefs may have been, it is probable that the United States officials felt that there was considerable peril to the missionaries in the arrival of the lately hostile Creeks in 1836. These people had resisted the Georgia militia with force and were removed in chains by the United States Army.[35] In May, 1837, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, C. A. Harris, wrote to the acting superintendent approving his action in expelling the missionaries, but saying that he saw no reason for keeping them out, as they were authorized to be in the Indian country.[36] Evidently proceeding upon the assumption that the expulsion was only temporary, the Baptist General Convention appointed Reverend Charles P. Kellam in 1836, but he was prevented by the disorders in the Creek Nation from assuming his duties and was thus forced to remain at a Choctaw mission.[37] Rollin, although he had been exonerated by the Creek Chiefs, upon attempting to return to the nation, was refused admittance by the council.[38] The Creeks, or at least a portion of the Creeks,[39] passed a law forbidding preaching.[40] This law was not a legal restriction upon white men as Creek laws were not binding upon citizens of the United States, but the violation of it could be made the basis for a request by the Creeks to the United States officials for the removal of a troublesome missionary.

In 1837 Kellam was admitted to the Creek Nation as a Government teacher.[41] Settling at Ebenezer, he established meetings, and, in 1838, Reverend James Mason was invited to come to the nation to teach. After his arrival, he was summoned before the national council and with difficulty induced them to allow him to remain. In 1838 Kellam was deprived of his position as a Government teacher.[42] In 1840 an Indian fired at Mason and another Indian pursued him with a knife.[43] Shortly thereafter, feeling that he and his family were unsafe in the Creek Nation, Mason left.[44] Missionaries from the Cherokee Nation visited the Creek Christians from time to time,[45] and eventually the latter began going to the adjacent nations for worship.[46] Reverend Eber Tucker, whose station was in the Cherokee Nation, helped organize the Canadian River Baptist Church with two hundred twenty members.[47] The Seminoles refused to accept the Creek law against preaching, and it was possible to conduct meetings in their part of the Creek Nation.[48] By 1842 there were a number of prominent men among the Creeks who favored missions, and some of them went so far as to offer to construct mission houses in the Cherokee Nation if missionaries should be appointed.[49]

In 1841 Reverend R. M. Loughridge came to the Creek council and proposed that he be allowed to establish a school and preach in the Creek Nation. The chiefs told him they would take the matter into consideration in about three weeks. When the council considered his proposition, they wanted Loughridge to teach but not to preach. He reported that an old chief said, "We want a school, but we don't want any preaching; for we find that preaching breaks up all our old customs . . . our feasts, ball plays, and dances . . . which we want to keep up."[50] Loughridge told them he was a preacher and would not come to their nation unless they would let him preach. The council compromised with him, allowing him to preach at his school house. He was a little doubtful about accepting this until Ben Marshall urged upon him the consideration that he might acquire more liberty when the Indians became better acquainted with him. However, it was not until 1843 that Loughridge, with M'Kinney, who soon left, located twenty-six miles from Fort

Gibson, at Coweta. He found that the church organized by Vail and Montgomery had dissolved.[51]

The Creek Agent, J. L. Dawson, reported in 1842 that Roley McIntosh and Ben Marshall requested that a preacher of some denomination be sent among them.[52] Dawson recommended that if the Creeks enlarged their school fund sufficiently, a manual labor school should be established with a preacher as head teacher. He said that it was represented to the chiefs that it was not fitting that an important subject such as religion was should be left wholly in the hands of uneducated negroes.[53] Dawson said he thought that the moral condition of the Creeks was injured by their lack of religion, and that such preaching as was carried on by negroes was measurably effective in checking the general licentiousness.[54]

In 1842, largely through the efforts of Isaac McCoy,[55] the American Indian Mission Association was organized with headquarters at Louisville, Kentucky. The first appointment under the new association was Reverend Johnston Lykins, son-in-law of Isaac McCoy. The second appointment was Reverend Sidney Dyer who stayed only a few months because of ill health.[56] It seems that Dyer's work was successful, however, in spite of its short duration, because his preaching led to the conversion of Joseph Islands,[57] who proved to be very influential among the Creek people.

In 1844 Agent Logan reported that Loughridge was winning the confidence of the people.[58] In that year John Limber arrived to assist Loughridge.[59] It was in 1844 that the council's

law against preaching and praying in public was suspended.[60] Religious societies extended their activities.[61] W. D. Collins, Methodist, reported the appointment of three local preachers, Pete Harrison, Cornelius Perryman, and Samuel Checote.[62] Persecution had not altogether died out,[63] however, and in 1845 two persons were given fifty lashes for preaching, and Peter Harrison was threatened.[64]

The elevation of Ben Marshall to be second chief of the lower towns in 1846 promised to be a beneficial event from the point of view of the missionaries, as Marshall was friendly toward missions. In October, 1846, Loughridge notified the council that inasmuch as other preachers of other denominations were being permitted to speak freely throughout the nation, he felt there should be no objection to his doing the same, and that he would proceed on the assumption that his restriction to preaching only at the mission had been removed ur less they should forbid it. The council made no objections, and Loughridge from that time on preached wherever he could.[65] On February 17, 1846 John Lilley and his family arrived at Kowetah (Coweta), and Reverend John Limber left for Texas.[66]

In 1847, Reverend H. F. Buckner came to the Creek Nation to preach. The council did not consent to his presence, although he was allowed to remain.[67] A letter from Buckner (December 17, 1848) records the founding of the Big Spring Baptist Church,[68] with James Perryman, a Creek, as its first pastor. The Little
River Mission to the Seminoles, under Reverend James Essex, Methodist, established in the Creek country, reported considerable opposition in 1848.[69] They had a school of fifteen children, a Sunday School of twenty, and one society with sixteen Indian and four colored members.

For some time preceding December, 1847, the Baptists had had no white missionaries among the Creeks. Preaching was carried on by Indians who proved remarkably successful. By 1848 several of the chiefs had become Christians.[70] By 1848, the Methodists, whose work had been carried on largely by visitors from the surrounding nations, had divided the Creek Nation into three districts and had appointed missionaries in charge of each district.[71] T. B. Ruble headed the Muskogee District, W. D. Collins and Daniel Asbury headed the North Fork and Little River District, and W. A. Cobb was in charge of the Creek Agency Mission. Mr. Ruble reported little opposition to religion.[72] The good standing of religion may be judged by the fact that Roley McIntosh attended a meeting held by H. F. Buckner, in 1849.[73] Buckner mentions the licensing of D. N. McIntosh, Creek, in 1850.[74]

The United States entered into contracts with the Methodist and Presbyterian Boards for the establishment of two manual labor schools at different and convenient points in the Creek Nation in 1847.[75] According to the report of Thomas B. Ruble, Superintendent of the Asbury Manual Labor School,[76] the manual labor schools were constructed jointly by Creek Nation funds which were administered by the United States and the denomination's board. In the case of the Asbury School, the Government spent five thousand dollars to the Methodist Church, South's, four thousand dollars. Ruble mentions the difficulty of transportation which was experienced in the construction of this school. There were few roads and no railways in the Creek Nation then.

For several years after 1849, a controversy raged as to the comparative value of the manual labor schools and of the neighborhood schools in educating the Indian youth properly. Both types of schools were in charge of missionary teachers. The manual labor schools probably kept the Indian children under the influence of the missionaries longer, and thus gave the children more opportunity to forget Indian mores and superstitions. Another point raised against the system as a whole was that too little attention was paid to the mechanical arts.[77] This was a point which touched the missionaries in a vital spot. They were primarily interested in teaching the Indians religion, and they reasoned that a liberal type of education was more likely to result in the absorption of Bible knowledge than mechanical training was. Then, too, most of the missionaries were not capable of giving the students mechanical training.

It is difficult to estimate the importance of these schools to the Creeks. The teachers were quite commonly preachers who went out into the rural communities and preached, not only bringing the Christian message, but also causing social gatherings where singing was done from the Creek hymnals which they had translated into the various Creek languages.[78] Sometimes the people moved their places of residence in order that they might be near a school.[79] Evidently they had grown to appreciate the advantages of education and religion. As the Creeks became better educated, many of them became school teachers, as well as preachers. These avenues of advancement doubtless influenced the quality of scholarship and the esteem with which education
and good character were regarded. At the same time, the growth of economic opportunity in the teaching profession, and the lessening of the pioneering hardships,

may have produced a lower average of character and religious enthusiasm among the teachers.[80] Apparently teachers whose religious affiliations differed from those of their patrons were sometimes appointed as the number of schools and churches multiplied.[81]

In 1849, the Baptists had in the Creek Nation six preachers, Reverend H. F. Buckner, at the Creek Agency, Reverend Americus L. Hay, at North Fork, Reverend James Perryman, at Big Spring, Reverend Chilly McIntosh, at North Fork, Reverend William McIntosh, at North Fork, Reverend Yar-too-chee, at Broken Arrow, and Reverend Andrew Frazier, at Elk Creek.[82]

The efforts of the missionaries may safely be credited, according to the evidence, with no small portion of the responsibility for a considerable growth of sobriety and morality among the Creeks. Until 1847, most of the witnesses who have left their observations on record speak of the moral condition of the Creek people as being very low, except where Christianity was being taught. In 1847, James Logan, Creek Agent, said that the liquor laws were being violated almost exclusively by Indians.[83] Logan said that he worked hard to get the Creeks to suppress the traffic, and that they finally passed a law drastic enough to suppress the trade, if it had been honestly enforced. However, the high prices resulting from the efforts to enforce this law excited the cupidity of the chiefs themselves, with the result that they entered into the trade and for a time maintained a monopoly, until it became known to those who had formerly made their living by the sale of spiritous liquor. Duvall, the Seminole sub-agent, said that it was impossible to keep whiskey out as long as the Indians wished to bring it in.[84] In 1849, Phillip

H. Raiford reported that the Creeks were as sober and industrious as any other people.[85] He attributed this to the restrictions of the chiefs who had caught the spirit of reform.[86] In his report for 1853, Loughridge said that at the last annual meeting of the National Temperance Society, the chief took a decided stand in behalf of temperance, signing the pledge to abstain from strong drink as an example to the people.[87] Ben Marshall's efforts in behalf of temperance involved him in dissensions at that time, as the people were greatly aroused by the fact that law violators were being punished twice for the same offense, once by the Creek authorities and once by the United States.[88] Marshall took no slight risk by insisting upon the enforcement of the Creek law.

The cause of temperance continued to advance through more efficient enforcement of the laws and through the influence of temperance societies.[89] In 1858, the matter of enforcement of liquor laws was practically up to the Creeks, who, through their police, called light-horse, were confiscating and spilling liquor and bringing offenders before their courts to be fined four dollars a gallon for all the liquor found in their possession.[90] This vigorous effort to enforce their laws doubtless emanated from chiefs who were moral Christians, and from an enlightened public opinion which gave the chiefs moral support. The United States had abandoned Fort Gibson, and the Creeks were unassisted by the military forces. The Creek chiefs wanted a post established on the Arkansas to assist them in suppression of the liquor traffic.[91]

The schools continued to grow during the period 1850-1860. This growth is illustrated by that of the Presbyterian Manual Labor School at Kowetah, under the superintendency of R. M. Loughridge. In 1853, this school employed, besides the superintendent, six other full time workers. Their qualifications were probably better, on the average, than their predecessors had been. The members of the faculty were: W. S. Robertson, A. M., principal; Mrs. A. E. Robertson, Miss C. W. Eddy, Miss N. Thompson, Mrs. E. Reid. The sixth employee was Alexander McCune, steward and farmer. The school enrolled eighty pupils and taught the same subjects that were in the curriculum in the States.[92]

Probably the missionaries would have been as successful in the Creek Nation as any other preachers elsewhere had it not been for the growing bitterness engendered by the slavery issue which was sweeping the whole United States. A year or two before the Civil War the missionaries from the North began to find their positions precarious. They began to abandon the country. It is probable that Elias Rector, Southern Superintendent, and the pro-slavery United States officials would have liked nothing better than to remove the anti-slavery missionaries on the ground that they were interfering with the domestic institutions of the tribes.[93]

Unfortunately the Creeks were unfavorably situated for the development of Christian fellowship with the white Christians in the East. Lingering prejudices and social conflicts placed the Creeks in almost as unfavorable a position in the West. To these difficulties should be added those of isolation and an unhealthy climate which terminated the work of many missionaries before they were well oriented in the field. Yet one must acknowledge that the missionaries, beset with difficulties as they were, achieved works worthy of their cause. Since spiritual contributions are impossible to evaluate, their works can be judged only by their material contributions. Much of the education of the Creek people proceeded through missionary channels. Much of the temperance work done among the Creeks was carried on by missionaries and their Creek and negro proselytes,[94] and intemperance was certainly a great evil among these people.[95] Government efforts to stop the liquor traffic were unsuccessful until the Creeks themselves became convinced that drinking was an evil. It was observed that, even in the discouraging days of active persecution, many of the Christians observed a strict temperance.[96] The temperance societies were credited by Loughridge with the aroused public opinion which led to more strenuous efforts on the part of the Creeks to enforce their laws against introducing liquor.[97] Furthermore, several of the greatest leaders of the Creeks were schooled for that leadership in the Christian ministry. Three of the sons of General McIntosh became Baptist preachers,[98] and to these should be added the names of these illustrious in the annals of the Methodist Church, Peter Harrison, Cornelius Perryman, and Samuel Checote.[99]

Tribal Elders Interviews

During the time they settled in the East, the oldest of what we have at the tribal ground is perhaps the ball pole, which is a game between men. In it they throw out a cow skull or something that symbolizes a fish or some kind of skull. At the tribal ground nearest here, their ball pole it has been said is the symbol of a war club, so they never put up a cow skull or any image of a fish up there, but there is a knot there and it is supposed to represent a club.

This is one of the oldest of what the tribe has, the ball pole is older than the ceremonial ground itself, because it represented that migration when the earth opened its bowels somewhere in the West, and they went further West and lived in a land of fog and this is where the clans originated.

When the winds came and blew the fog away, the first animal that one saw he became of that clan, and , of course, the first animal was the Bear. So the bear became the leading clan and all the others followed, deer, raccoon, and whatever the tribe had originated in this land.

. . .they thought the sun was the purest thing of anything their eyes could see. . .

However, the children would not grow up so they decided to go East, and they thought the sun was the purest thing of anything that eyes could see. So they went East and no one knows for how long they travelled going East.

While doing this, they came to a mountain and the story says that the mountain thundered, and it had red smoke coming from the top of this mountain, which nowadays it sounds very much like a volcano.

. . .they set the pole up whichever way it fell, gave them direction. . .

However, there was a pole that trembled all the time and nothing could stop it. For some reason, and why I never could figure it out, but these kinds of stories has been told over and over in other incidents, they took a motherless child, which is an orphan child that had no parents, and they slamed that baby against the pole and killed the baby and when this happened, the pole stopped.

And this pole, they picked it up and during the migration wherever they settled, they set the pole up and whichever way it fell, it gave them the direction which way to go. Always, it fell toward the East and they migrated going East.

There were three groups of people that came out of the earth. They were known as the Cussista people, the second group was known as the Chicksaw, the Chicksaw is an entirely different tribe now, but our language is similar, and the third group was Coweta.

These were the first tribal grounds of the Muscogee people that came from the West. They went on East until they reached the East coast, they couldn't see where the sun was coming from, what they were determined to see, but since it came out of the ocean, they couldn't go any further, so they settled there along the coast for perhaps several years.

The pole for once in all the years of migration, fell backwards. . .telling them to go back. . .

The pole for once in all the years of migration fell backwards, telling them to come back, so they came back to the inland and lived in Georgia and Alabama when the white man came here.

However, when they were settled there, they settled for good and this is where the tribal grounds was established. Naturally the first tribal grounds was Coweta, and the Chicksaws also had their language which was similar and their names were that of the Muscogee Tribe.

Cussista meant to say in plain ancient language, where is the sun or where is it coming from, that was the idea in the first place and the Chicksaws, they too, their names were picked up from the Muscogee language, too, because their name was Weegecussossa, someone who see the sun.

The others were Coawheta and that in latter years changed into Coweta. The Cussista people, in our modern times, are located around Okmulgee and they even have the Cussista church out there and nearby there was a Cussista tribal ground and these were the first people.

And the Coweta grounds were located toward Eufaula and the Chicksaw, of course, they were a separate tribe. Speaking almost the same language and were close friends to the Cussista people. I was told that in early times, real early times, when the Muscogees went to war and they fought against the Cherokees and other tribes, and always the Chicksaws refused to aid any other body and any other tribe, because of their connection with the Cussista peole. These were the first tribal grounds, however, in migrating to the East they met the other clan which is called Red Clan of today.

These are what we call Tukabotchee people and they are located around west of Wetumka. That is the oldest grounds of this other clan and they have an entirely different story of how they came about.

Their story that they descended from the sky on seven blocks of wood. They speak the same language, but they do no say they came from the West.

They were from the East and had always been there when the people from the West arrived. They met these Tukabotchee people over there and it was said that in ancient times when one went into a village they shot a white arrow into the village, white is always the sign of peace among the Muscogee people. But, if the white arrow returned with the red paint, that meant war.

So the Cussista people that came from the West shot an arrow into this village and a red one returned, so that meant war and they never knew each other until the evening of the war. They met each other at the river.

One asked each who was the other, and the people across the river said, "I am Tukabotchee." The other said, "I am Coweta", and on that evening they learned they could understand each other in language. Rather than go to war, they compared medicines.

. . .what we call the Redroot, is took from the short willows. . .not the regular willows. . .

The medicine that is used in the tribal ground today was displayed by the people. The other across the river had what is called spicewood and also the people from the West had spicewood also, but they didn't present their spicewood, instead they presented what we call the Redroot, which is took from the short willows, not the regular willows that you see here.

The Redroot and the Spicewood was laid down together to demonstrate their powers and after much whooping, they were going to show one another how much power this medicine had. So the Coweta people, before whooping four times, the earth began to shake.

Then the same for the Tukabotchee people. When the Tukabotchee stomped their foot on the ground, another earthquake came about to show that the two medicines combined together and this was the beginning of the Muscogee people.

Combining the two people, one from the skies and one from the earth, made the largest confederacy in the Southeast area.

In the Muscogee Confederacy, they spoke something like six different dialects and many of them were small tribes coming out of Louisiana and around the area. These tribes were to small to hold off their enemies, the French or the British or whoever they may be. So they had to go to the Muscogee country to find refuge among the Muscogee people. That made them that much more powerful in the Southeast. This is how the tribal grounds got started.

The Muscogee people also had the circle. . .we can't get away from that circle . . .it is a measurement with no beginning and no ending. . . everything revolves in that circle. . .

These tribal grounds were regarded as sacred grounds, because of the circle. Even though we are looking at the Muscogee traditions, we can't get away from that circle, that that circle is something sacred to all the nations of this country, no matter what tribe they are the circle has always been something sacred.

The Muscogee people also had the circle, and it is well known among all Indian people that it is a measurement with no beginning and no ending, and it represents the cycle of life that to this day Spring was here last year, it's here this year and has been going on for thousands of years. Everything revolves in that circle, so the ceremonial grounds, each and every ceremonial ground, either red clan or white clan, they all have this circle.

The terrace around this ground and the grounds were cleaned and kept cleaned and hoed out every year around later part of June or July. What was cleaned out was raked onto this terrace that built the circle around these ceremonial grounds. In that ancient times that was the end of the year and the beginning of the new one.

Cleaning out the grounds meant new life again. . .

Cleaning out the grounds meant new life again, so a new fire was built which was the sacred fire, built with flint fire and the old ashes were taken out, out of the circle, and new earth was put there. The new fire was built there to symbolize the end of the year and a new year.

They say that in ancient times even their old clothes were thrown away and they made new ones. Even their old dishes were busted and they built new dishes and everything was renewed at that time.

The new year for the Muscogee people was not that of January first; it was during the Greencorn ceremony that was the beginning of the new year. And old bitter feelings, crimes that were committed during the past year were forgiven, even before entering into the ground everything was forgiven to one another. Even some of the crimes that was committed, a real serious crime, was even forgiven. Everything was renewed during this time and that's what the Greencorn ceremony is all about.

I had a chance to go to Africa two years ago. I went to Ywandi, Cameroon. The World spiritual leaders and medicine people were meeting with the World ministers, church ministers, sponsored by the World Council of Churches. I went there and I thought it was a real interesting meeting there, because the church leaders had four or five workshops and traditional people only had one which I thought was good, because among the traditional people there is a common understanding of the creation and many stories are similar throughout the whole world. I find out that the Bantu tribe of Cameroon, they also have a new years. Their new year comes off in September and in their villages they too clean out all the villages, rake everything up and clean it up and they, too, build a sacred fire thats to burn throughout the whole year. I noticed the similarity there.

The sacredness of the ground there, we sometimes overlook what the ground was about. I suppose that this began maybe a hundred years ago, that these grounds began to be put down, because of misunderstanding, not knowing what its all about. Even the social dances that takes place at night, when taking part in the ceremonies, it is required that everyone that takes part stays awake all through the night. The Muscogee people are great people to stay awake at night and to last. So the fasting goes on all day long, taking of the medicine, is purifying one's self. Then at night the dances are for the purpose of staying awake. There are other stories that says that participating in the ceremony is old but the dances came later for the purpose of staying awake.

The social dances, there is alot of questions that come about that too, because of the songs that cannot be interpreted. The songs that are sung in there, no one can interpret that, because in the beginning we had no teachers, no instructors. We could only copy off nature and the whole civilization of the Indian people was copied off of a study of

nature. So when we hear the birds sing, we never question no one what they're saying, but with the Muscogee people there has been a lot of questions asked, what are they saying? If they don't know they are saying they shouldn't say it, seems to be the idea.

There has been a lot said about the tribal grounds, but it is a copy of nature and you do not question nature. Why did you (Nature) bring your leaves in April? You never ask the trees this. When you hear the lion roar, no one asks the lion what the lion is saying. So we always felt that we are a part of nature.

Many of the songs that you hear in the tribal grounds may have no interpretation, but it is understood that other tribes can sing the same songs and they can use the same words. This dances goes on all night long until next morning. I one time heard some songs in South America that I, myself, could sing with them, because it had the same words that we use at the tribal grounds here, and probably it is the same way with other tribes, too, in their songs. There's hardly any songs, traditional songs, that can be interpreted unless it be that of the church songs, now those can be interpreted. And of course, the medicine songs of our people, if it was not so much against our way that too can be translated into English, but it never has, and I don't think it ever will.

> . . .the medicine songs of our people. . .can be translated into English, but it never has, and I don't think it ever will be. . .

There are a lot of meanings in our tradition that are never brought out because our ancestral homelands are away in Georgia and Alabama and all the mounds that are over there today.

I had a chance to see some of these mounds where our people are buried. When buried there, they were not laying down. Many of these mounds that have been excavated all over the East coast area, Ohio, and all those states over there, even though they were not our people. The Indians there buried their people very much like ours.

In these mounds they found bones of our people buried setting up. And I heard from some of the old-timers in this community here talk about our people being buried setting up. When they were buried they were doubled up (fetal) in this fashion; they were placed in the ground and dirt was covered over them and continuing to do this built up these mounds that they have there in these states now. Many of these mounds that they find, burial mounds especially, they will find bones in that shape and even as far as Peru. I've seen in the British museum last year when I was there and I had the chance to go to what they called the Indian storage house, and I have seen that the Peru Indians are buried the same way. I seen them setting up when they were buried.

> . . .you return as you were born . . .so it gives you a good idea how come they buried their people in these mounds. . . so when one dies, he goes back to Mother Earth, just like when he was born. . . that's why they buried them setting up . . .

Now, according to some of the old people that were around here, they say that, not only these old people, I guess, it is common and well-known that you return as you were born. So it gives you an idea how come they buried their people in these mounds. Before you were born into this world in the mother's womb, that's the shape that you were in; you was all doubled up like that and at the end of nine months, you came into the world. With every Indian throughout this whole nation they refer to the earth as Mother Earth. So when one dies he goes back to Mother Earth, just like he was born and that's the reason why they buried them setting up. Then building the mounds represented a pregnant woman - that's what it stood for. Later on in years, they began to bury them laying down as we do now.

So what traditions and customs that our people had, they had meanings that's somewhat lost throughout the years. Education, perhaps is responsible for a lot of this. Sometimes Christianizing people is responsible for this also, because all this was worldly and had no meaning to the new people that arrived in this country; they were from another culture. So, in the short four or five hundred years much of this has been lost, but if we study our history that we call Indian way of life, it's not that much different in any other race of people. Because I take it that whether he be a Frenchman or Dutchman or whatever he may be, life couldn't have begun much different, because at one time, they too had no teachers, they too had no schools, had no universities to go to when their ancestors came about. So they were also close to nature. They also studied nature.

I reminded them of that when I was in London last year; I lectured one week there in downtown London, and I reminded those English people that their ancestors, too had their mind set on nature at one time. Thier old buildings say so; the modern buildings don't tell us that, but the old buildings down the street have imprints of nature on that building. The old furniture has a print of nature on that furniture, but the modern furniture, there is nothing there to remind us of nature no more. The modern buildings are all glass. Bach and Mozart, they were nature-minded too, they remind us of nature. So the old people way back they had their minds set on nature; they had their love for nature at one time. But under the name of progress, perhaps, our people's thoughts of nature were drained out of them.

Destruction of nature came about the way we see it to this day: that if these trees are in our way, all we have to do is bulldoze them down. There is no love for nature, but in a small way maybe there are certain groups of people that are struggling and fighting to preserve nature; and always the native people had love for nature, they have always had love for what they call Mother Earth.

I am constantly thinking of

I like Switzerland, because I never saw Pampers laying on the roadside. . .

my travels, such as Switzerland. It is a beautiful country, the mother-country of many people here like Germany and those countries over there. But best of all, I like Switzerland, because I never saw Pampers laying on the roadside, I never saw a beer can laying there, and the country is so clean, and those people have been there for hundreds of years. They have them a farmland that they farmed for years and years, year after year. They're still farming those lands and they're still producing good vegetables, big cabbages, big broad leaves of mustard or whatever. They still produce good food because they keep their land up.

Coming back to our country, I look around and think about people here. Is it because the mother-country is over there; and their life didn't originate here for them that they lay this land in waste, they keep it trashy? I always wonder about that and I've heard this about going to greener pastures, and I've wondered what that really means.

We don't rebuild our land, . . .We wear the land out, and leave it in waste . . .

Then I begin to think after traveling and going to these other countries and seeing how clean these countries are and coming back here - we don't rebuild our land here. We wear the land out and leave it in waste, and then we go over here.

The first people that came here, they drifted from another country, and they remained here, and their descendents that live here in this country maybe their drifters, too. So they're willing to leave Chicago, they're willing to leave Los Angeles, or they're willing to leave Ohio and come to Oklahoma, Connecticut, anywhere they want to go, they do that. But they leave the land in waste, and they go to the greener pastures and sometimes I just almost figure out what this guy is thinking if he wants this land.

Now this is the original allotment of my mother; we are fortunate out of thousands of our people that don't have any land any more. We are fortunate to at least have this 160 acres here and I can just imagine somebody passing by and thinking there is no improvement on this land and wishes that he had it, because he believes in going to greener pastures. He begins to look over here instead of rebuilding his land. He wants this land over here, so I kind of have an idea of what they mean, going to greener pastures now and that's the trouble with a lot of other tribes now.

. . .this whole area was the Muscogee land that was assigned to them. . . they're still attached to this land here. . .

But, getting back to our Muscogee People here, this whole area was the Muscogee land that was assigned to them; it is not our original homeland. But, after being here for more than a hundred years, we became attached to this land here. But from basic pressure from all directions, that many of our people had to give up their land, move into cities urban areas, so there is not that many Indians living out here in the country no more. But, still yet, they're still attached to this land here; we have Muscogee people living in Sacramento, but when they're talking about their home, they're not talking about that apartment in Sacramento. They're talking about back here in the Eastern part of Oklahoma. This is their home, whether they have land here or not, this is still their home.

You can take even the people that goes to these tribal grounds, many of them live in cities, but when their tribal ground is gonna have something going on, they come all the way back from Oklahoma City and Tulsa and camp here. Alright, you go to their churches, many of the Creek church members, they live in Oklahoma City and Tulsa and Dallas, all over, but they're always coming back, because they recognize this is home. They may not have a foot of land anymore, but after coming through here they can feel they're back home again.

One of the things I am always kind of proud of, you know, we like many other tribes, have our little dissentions, we have our little factions, Indian politics, and so on, but for some reason, we've kept our language. . . . Visiting many other tribes, I find out there are some tribes that don't have a language at all. But within our Muscogee people, they have managed to keep their language, even at the churches they're singing songs, praying and preaching in their own language.

Our language is strong and that's what is required to continue with your culture. They will never learn the full tradition of our people without the language; that language has to be there. People from different tribes and non-Indians come here wanting to be medicinemen, but I tell them it's impossible because you don't know the language. You have to know the language in order to keep this going, but with our young people, where they lose the language, they can read and study all they want to about the Creek traditions and customs, but without the language, they will never have a full understanding of it.

Even telling a story, what we always refer to as bedtime stories when we were children, we knew what they were talking about when they start talking about rabbit or coyote or whatever. We knew what they were talking about and we were told those stories all through the growing up period we heard these little stories. Now, with the children today, they don't understand their language so you try to tell that in English and somewhere along the story it loses it's meaning. It's not even funny.

The language we have is a beautiful language. We have no cuss words; every word we can understand and it always made me think of my school years. I went to grade school and I was placed in an orphan home in Muskogee. At that time they did not want me to speak my language. So I had to go and play around with Cherokees and other tribes so I forget my

language. But somehow I managed to preserve it and all of my children here I taught them my language. There are alot of those, mainly those growing up in cities, they don't speak their language.

Our language is still strong, but still yet, most of our people year after year, they're moving into Okemah or Okmulgee or somewhere. Their children seem to be forgetting their language or the parents are not teaching them. That language is required.

You can take the beliefs of something that is sacred, to us or has always been holy to the tribe, it seems to me like it is no longer there, even the tribal grounds. The very people that operates there probably doesn't know the full meaning of what's going on there. Some of them probably go to it because mama used to go to it or grandpa used to go to it, not really understanding what the fire in the center is all about or how come it's there. Sometimes I get into a little argument with some people that kind of talk against it and sometimes it comes from church-going people.

In the early times the missionaries made a mistake by thinking that we worship the fire and to this day that thought still kind of hangs around, that the traditional people worship the fire. If whoever is saying this is a church person or church-going person, I remind them how come God did not speak to Moses in person, rather a burning bush spoke to Moses.

The thoughts of the Creation is different among the Muscogee people than other tribes. These are some of the things I have learned the past few years of my travels;

The Lakota people pray directly to the Great Spirit, much like Christian people only they use the pipe to communicate to the Great Spirit. The Navajo communicate with a Great Spirit in their own way. Alot of other tribes, they pray directly with the Creator or the Great Spirit. One thing I find out studying my own ways, that we never had a prayer direct with the Creator or to the Great Spirit and it's hard to explain this to other tribes. Why? Even to a non-Indian it would be very difficult for them to understand because of the language also.

We had no name for the Creator. . .

The other tribes they pray direct to the Creator or the Great Spirit, whatever they call it, and the white man his Jehovah, God, he prays direct to him.

Traditional Muscogee people in ancient times had no such prayer and we are the only ones that I can think of that don't have that kind of prayer, because we had no name for the Creator. In ancient times the Creator was called the One Above All. That's the only name that we had and in later years through Christianizing our people, we began to call God in our language. Much further back than Christianity coming to us they had no name for the Creator, it was against the religion of our people to try to picture or try to figure out the Creator.

In the Southeast culture, the belief is in four separate worlds; underneath, surface, water, and the sky. Within the four separate worlds there is no description of a Creator, and so, if I say that creator may be a tree or what we call Above All, maybe a moon or star or the sun or maybe the Earth, it would be hard for you to dispute that. If I stick to my agrument, there's no way you can win. Grab all your books that you can find and you cannot win, because no one has ever saw the Creator, no one has ever saw God. Then again we refer back to Moses, he only saw the shadow of God. What did the shadow look like? Did the shadow look like a human being? Or did it look like an animal? No one knows. So if you have never seen the Creator; if you have never seen God, you can't say that God is not a tree. There is no other way that you can describe the Creator outside this circle. You can't describe the Creator outside the creation, so that is the Muscogee people; no other tribe will talk about this in that way because I've been with them and I've talked about it with them.

There is a belief among other tribes that the Great Spirit is up here somewhere (above). There is the belief in the Christian teaching that God was like me. He had ears and eyes, he is a figure of me because in the Book of Genesis it says so, that we are in His image. So the belief is that there is this big guy up here somewhere which is called God or Creator, but within the ancient beliefs of the Muscogee people there is no such thing. That's why the belief is in the four separate worlds and what makes the four separate worlds is that there is life underneath and we have stories like the bedtime stories that I was talking about of what took place in early times between the animals underneath and those on the surface. We have stories that tell us what happened in the sky world, the earth, the water, there is life in water, too. What happened between these animals we have these stories and we understand what powers and energies that every part of the creation possess. A tiny blade of grass has powers that the biggest tree doesn't have, a little bitty insect has certain powers that the elephant doesn't have. So in every creation, there is powers and energies there and this is where the Muscogee belief comes that they are medicine people. They are believers in herbs. There's been many different people even in early times trying to explain what the word "Muscogee" means. Everybody fumbled around with that word for years and years, and I was told Muscogee is not a full word, it is only a part of a Creek word and what it really means is those that possess herbs. It was pronounced "Ishekeemusseeoksusske" and of course, white man can't say that, so "Muscogee" is easier, so Muscogee became our name. But what the long word means is "people that have tea or herbs" so most of our people were herbal people. They believed in mints, they believed in blackjacks (oak), elm, or whatever, that they have certain powers for certain cures. Not only was it the medicineman that used it, people that were not medicine people, they knew how to use these herbs and the whole, entire Muscogee Nation at one time in speaking their language, even a young person knew something concerning herbs. So, they were herbal people, that's where our name comes from.

The story tells us that at one

time all of the enemies of our people were everything within the creation and man stood alone with no friends. The animals, the birds, and everything was against the human being at one time, and that the only friend they could find was the herbs. The herbs came together and said that we will protect you; we will give you life and take care of you. so, they became friends in early times and they became the Muscogee people. That's where our names come from and there is a cure for everything. Now that we don't have that many medicine people, a cure is within our sight, perhaps, but because of the loss of our customs, loss of our language, we don't know what these cures are. We have to relearn that.I believe that its important because in time to come when I think of the modern technology that has brought about destructive devices, when this civilization comes to an end, how are we to survive again without the knowledge of the herbs? There will be no doctors.I've even looked at Ted Koppel's news not too long ago about the possibility of the Nuclear War. If anything happened in San Francisco or New York or wherever, there would'nt be enough doctors to take care of these people. If this is true, someday when this civilization comes to an end and if part of us remained alive, if part of us survive, how do we start life all over again without the knowledge of these herbs, without knowing how to take care of ourselves, since we have become dependent people. If something ever happened, it would be disasterous to everybody that drifted away from that natural way, because almost everyone depend on Safeway stores, super-markets, for their groceries and vegetables. We have become so dependent, it may be better that we die in the nuclear war, because if we survive we are not going to survive very long anyway because we do not know how.

. . .when this civilization comes to an end. . . they will say "This used to be Okemah". . .

I think it is important that we really understand our culture because all civilizations have come to an end at one time or another, history tells us that. Mayan civilization came to an end.

People go down to Central America and look at the walls there, how it was put together; they say that this was the old Aztec temple. This is the old city of the Mayans. The old ruins are there, tourist people go down there, millions of them go down there every year. And, when this civilization comes to an end, perhaps, tourist people will come through here and say "this used to be Okemah. This used to be Mason." Nothing prevents a civilization from coming to an end.

The loss of language was predicted years ago. . . the neglect of the ceremonial grounds was also told. . .

There are many prophecies that was told to our people. All these prophecies have been lost. They have these stories of where they come from and how they are going to end and what's going to happen. All these, many of them, were never recorded. Maybe just a few was recorded. The loss of language was predicted years ago. The neglect of the ceremonial grounds was also told and so all these have been lost in our tribe here.

I thing a lot about these things. Sometimes it makes me wonder how many of our people will be destroyed? How many of them will be lost forever? I keep looking around. I keep a thinking and I hope that I'm not the only Indian left because of knowing this. We may look like Indians, we have the color of an Indian, but what are we thinking? What are we doing to our own children who are losing their language, their own ways.

I sometimes think that even within the government, there's an all-out effort to lose Mr. Indian. Even Reagan, his new Federalism or whatever it is. it means cutting off all the funding from the Indian people. There's two new bills in there right now that's going to do that, unless something is done about it. All these programs that are being cut off, it may not effect me that much, but it's going to hurt a lot of my people. But on the other hand, what's our people acting like? What are they doing? Are they still trying to be Indians or are they just benefit Indians, a three-day Indian, a clinic Indian, or BIA-school Indian, what kind of Indians are we?

It makes me think about that and sometimes I think that one of these days we are going to find in our mail box, an application to fill out to be an Indian. Are you an Indian? Yes. How do you know? I've got a roll number. Do you speak your language? Probably be a lot of them that will be "No." Did you go to ceremonies? "No." Can you sing? "No." What makes you an Indian?

I wouldn't be a bit surprised if something similar to that happens, that we will have to answer those questions, each and every one of us someday. Because I feel like the precedent was set in Boston not too long ago when the Matchbe Indians went to court over the land claim in Maine and around that New England states. These Indians were claiming half of Maine and when they went to court,just like I've been saying for live or six years, these things came out. But when this case came up, the judge directed his questions to the leader of the Matchbe Indians and asked him if they have their language. Matchbe Indians don't have their language. They say they don't, just a few words. Do you have Pow-wows? Yes, we have Pow wows. Do you go, he said directing his question at the leader of the Matchbe? Yes, I go. What do you do? I go and watch them have Pow-wow; everytime they go, I'm there. Everything was turned over to the jury. After that, the question comes out - do white people go there? Yes, they go. What do they do? They observe. Turned over to the jury and the jury rules they (Matchbes) are not American Indians. They have been trying to appeal that case all this time, but I don't know if they're going to gain anything or not. But that's the very thing I've been talking about. It's going to take more than a number to be an Indian. And, those were the questions that came out of this court.

I think that from here on in, we as Muscogee people maybe facing the same thing in the future years. So, it is important that we preserve our language, try to know more and more bout our culture. If that man would have said, "I beat on a drum," or "I put on my costume," or "I get out there and I sing with them ," the jury would have something to think about. But they compared him to the whites and they were not any different so that's how come they were losing.

These people up there in the New England states, many of those tribes are not recognized by the government, because they have lost it. We have some in Louisiana, Cossadi Indians, that our part of our people, too, and they were never recognized by the government. They can even speak their language, those people down there, but they are not recognized. So I believe that we have something like that in store for us, too. I've always wanted to see some kind of cultural revival among our people here.

I let them know, there is no failure in life. . . until you try to be somebody else. . .

Many times when speaking to universities and colleges where there is a lot of Indian students, I let them know there is no failure in life, until you try to be somebody else.Any day you practise something that doesn't belong to us, something happens to us. many times we become failures. There is nothing wrong with our culture. There is nothing wrong with our tradition, even though there has been efforts made as I said to lose Mr. Indian. I still think that the pride that will come back to a race of people will prove that they once had a perfect life. We are proud people or should be proud people.

So far, we haven't built an Indian city, so far we haven't seen an Indian judge, we don't even see a jury, hardly ever see an Indian on a jury. We're very short on Indian lawyers. We're behind, but what's happened to us? Many of us, we have a problem,alcohol, suicide. All this is a problem among nationwide Indians. We,'loo have it right here in our Muscogee people. What happened to us? How come someone wants to kill himself? Not only a Muscogee person, but anybody. Why does one want to take his own life? Because he is not happy in life That's why people committ suicide and that's whats happening to our people, too. We have many, many young people who have taken their lives and it still goes on. We're in trouble all the time.

We are the only people that lived without prisons and jailhouses. There is no evidence of them in our history until very late. Not more than 70 years ago, we had our own court system. People were convicted to die and if it was determined that he would die or be shot there in the old courthouse, in the yard there at the tree, we didn't have to stick them in jail.Our people are honest, they are true people. So the judge would allow this man to go home, take care of his business. He would go home, make provision for his family, do everything he could within 30 days, had feast and dinner with relatives and at the end of 30 days, he came up to the old courthouse there, riding on his horse to be shot and killed in front of that tree there.

Today our young people are the first chance. They are going to run from the police and if their let free to go somewhere and come back, many don't ever appear, they jump bond. But in the old days, they knew their tradition.

CHRISTINE HENNEHA
Fullblood Creek
Age: 59
Castle Community

"First thing you gotta do is catch a turtle". . .

There are two designs; there are three designs really. You got that yellow-striped black one. Old folks used to tell me not to get them kind; they are part snake and part turtle. You might catch one and you might turn into a snake, so you have to know which kind to get.

The black one with the yellow streaks, don't get them kind, but get the polka-dot and plain color that we use. Those with the little flurry skirts, what I call them, are all females. You see some straight down, they're males. I got females on mine; like these female women, they don't like the other female women to outdo them, so, they make that sound better. I got a pair that's female and male mixed and they don't have as good a sound.

I got females on mine, they don't like the other females to outdo them, so they make that sound better. . .

Anyway, you catch one or you get a whole bunch before you start cleaning or you want to clean it now; it depends on how you feel. You get one and cut around the head part and under the neck and cut around the tail, and right in where there is one backbone, if your knife is long enough to get up that far and cut it, cut it and pull toward the head, he will clam up and you can't open them. But, if you pull toward the head, he will clam up on the tail and it will automatically loosen. When its open, we put them in the sun somewhere, and depending on how many days of sunshine you get, it will dry in four or five days.

Mostly, big black ants get in there and other little ants get in there and clean that out. But old folks a long time ago used to put them on a red ant bed and they would clean out the parts that hold the top and bottom shells together and they would fall apart. The black ants don't do that. After we think its cleaned pretty good we drill holes. You got four squares and there is supposed to be one in each one and two on the top. And, of course, for your mount, you gotta drill two there and on the bottom.

After you get your certain kind of pebbles down certain creeks where you can get them, you put them in there. We use the pearl looking ones like the buttons on cowboy shirts. We put them in there and slam it shut and put a wire on there. The tail is already slammed shut and we just string it up.

After you use them, you know which is the right and which is the wrong side; there is left and right just like shoes. You make them and then you use them. one side is always louder. The louder side goes on what you call "next to the fire", on the left side. You weight it and measure it and one will be louder than the other, and the loudest one goes next to the fire because you are going around that way.

Your milk cans are the same way. If you want cultural way, you should use only the turtle. They started using the milk cans because they didn't know how to put the turtles together. That's the reason they cost so much, because today I didn't see one turtle. You don't know how long its going to take you to find the turtles, then you clean it and you have to get you boot top. You have to go to Tandy's to find your leather.

On the cans they don't use wire or string or anything. you use straps to tie it with pretty tight so they don't slide down on your ankle. When you learn how to use them, and we don't have a certain age, if you're a little girl you just automatically learn. You get the rhythm like any other music, you get the rhythm of when to start your dancing. When you're a leader, you start you're singing.

I don't carry no more than eight. I've got about three-fourths full of pebbles in each one and they are heavy. I started making them by my just wanting a pair of my own. I look at everybody's and try to get it in my mind how to do it, where to put the holes and strings for each leg. People just pick it up themselves if they want to.

After supper, they get ready to dance all night and then they have to serve breakfast. . .

At the grounds, we start camping in on Wednesday. We have to fix them arbors and get some green wood. We're out there under the arbors all day and the womans are out there cooking all day because they have to serve supper.

After supper, they get ready to dance all night and then they have to serve breakfast.

We're moving in on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday to get their wood and water and clean up around the camp.

The men folks are busy cleaning up where they dance and the woman is out where the camps are cleaning up, cutting grass. By Friday, you should

June, and the third one in July, that would be the one we call Greencorn. The fourth one is in August, but some have their fourth on in September.

Every Sunday they have stickball with the man and woman playing together. This time, we had a death of one of our members, so we weren't allowed to do anything on our first dance in May.

We have to wait thirty days to go on the grounds, so we will just dismiss our first dance.

We have other beliefs like that, like when a woman is in her monthly period, she can't take part in the dance. The church people believe, too, that if a woman is in her period, she can't take communion. They say that represents the body and the blood, so if she is on her period, they won't let her take communion.

Stompdance is the same way. When they sweep around so far behind that arbor, they have a little slope around there and she can't go past that. She has to stay behind it if she is on her period, she can't dance, she can't take that medicine. The womans aren't allowed either way to sit under the arbors anyhow.

The women have their own arbors kind of back from the grounds. If a person has been drinking or if a girl is on her period, you can tell who it is and tell them something is wrong and you can't dance.

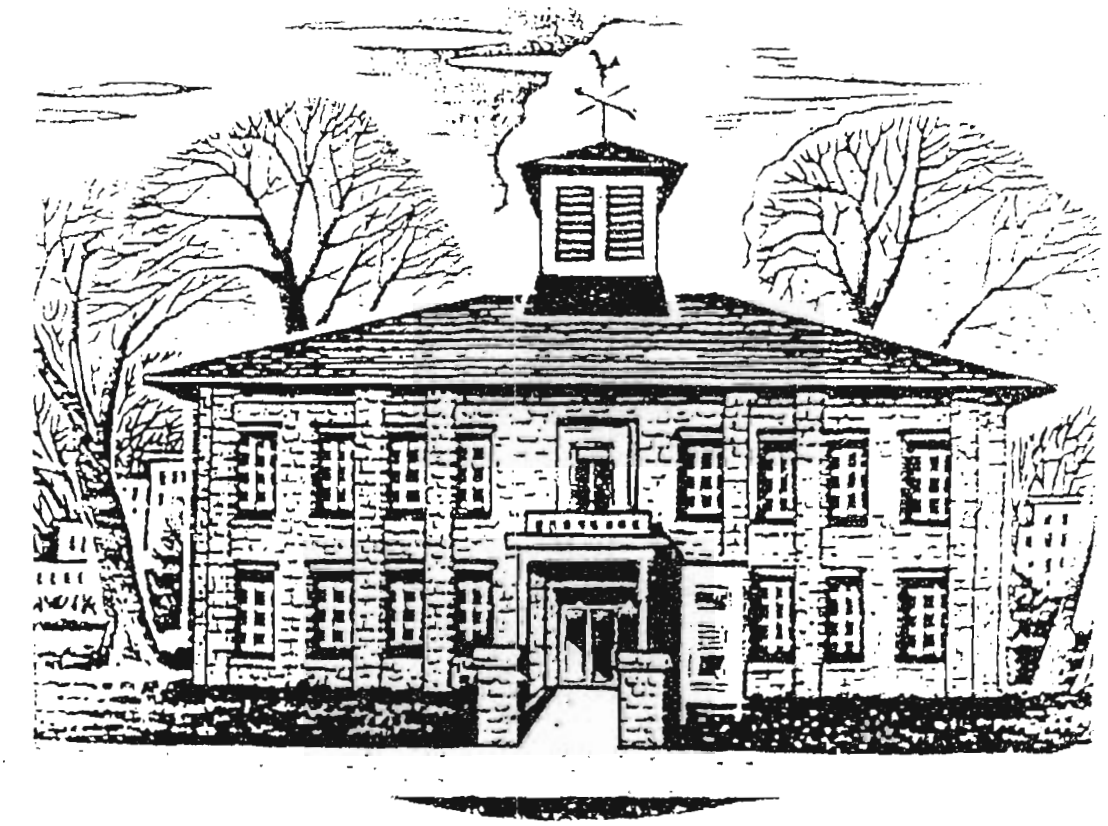
And a woman that's pregnant can't dance, but some of them do; they hurt themselves when they do that.

If anyone violates these things, they get sick and have dizziness or blackouts. That's what they mean when they say, "I've seen that fire work". Sometime they get a fever and there's no way to make that fever go down until they go back to a medicineman and he makes medicine through that fire, and then it cools them off.

Some call it heartattack, some call it stroke, but if they have been going to stompdance and taking medicine, that's what it is. Like if someone has been to a funeral and come by and touch a baby, it will make that baby have fever and convulsions. You have to go to a medicineman and let him chase away that dead spirit.

Some believe these Indians ways work. Some just know the non-Indian way, too many of the young. My grandfather taught me and explained to me, he told me and he showed me true facts of Creek way, and this is what I'm trying to pass on to my grandkids. I'm trying to give my grandchildren what he taught me.

Creek Council House Museum Information



CREEK COUNCIL HOUSE HISTORY

The Creek council House Museum was constructed in 1878. Its original purpose was the Creek national Capital of the Muscogee Creek Nation. It was originally used as a council House for meetings of the Creek National council. Later, with the creation of a Supreme Court, the judicial branch of the government was also housed in the building.

After the Creek tribal government was required to dissolve the by United States government in 1907, the building was purchased by the city of Okmulgee in 1919. In 1923, Judge Orlando Swain organized the Creek Indian Memorial Association (CIMA) with the purpose to collect, preserve and exhibit the history and culture of the Muscogee (Creek) Tribe. The CIMA has continued with this goal and has a lease with the City of Okmulgee for an additional sixty-three years for this purpose.

The National Park service included the Council House on the National Register as a National Historic Landmark in 1961. This is the highest designation of historic properties in the United States. The entire city block, including the grounds is part of the National Register designation.

The Council House Museum is also one of only sixteen places it the United States featured in "Uncommon Places of America" a national traveling photo art exhibit sponsored by Kodak.

Although there are other key museums which also house American Indian collections of great significance, the Creek council House Museum is recognized nationally for both the historic importance of the building grounds, and also the Creek collection and exhibits which are unique expressions of creative thought by many great Indian artists. Likewise, the CIMA has long been a pioneer in advancing the study of American Indians. Its collection of manuscripts and printed material has allowed unique and rich curricular opportunities for many scholars and interested people from many nations.

The Creek Indian Memorial Association has been a 1.7 million dollar project to restore the 112 year old Creek Council House to its original condition. The CIMA, through its non-profit status, will be seeking funds for the restoration from federal monies, corporate grants, foundation grants, and a fund-raising campaign.

This restoration project will include not only the interior and exterior shell of the building but also an underground vault for the storage of art and artifacts as well as new casework, cabinetry, displays and historic furnishings.

The CIMA also maintain the Red Stick Gallery which displays for sale local Indian artists painting and crafts for the support of the museum and other functions of the CIMA.

The Council House has been the heart of this region of the country. It comprises a large city block known as the Town Square in the center of the business district of Okmulgee. The prime location of the museum and grounds has been the site for most of the community activities within a forty-mile radius. For example, the Pecan Festival, the Christmas Festival of Lights and the Oklahoma Indian Art Market.

The 1989 Oklahoma Indian Art Market had over forty locally and nationally, recognized Native American Artist participating as well as a one person exhibit by nationally known Creek Artist, Dana Tiger.

The Museum has excellent regional accessibility, being located one-half mile form a major artery of transportation that links Tulsa, Oklahoma to Dallas Ft. Worth, Texas. Also, the nation's major east-west thoroughfare, Interstate 40, is only sixteen miles south of the museum.

HISTORY OF CREEK COUNCIL HOUSE

18 Congress approved President Andrew Jackson's policy of Indian removal.

1836-40 After early resistance, most of the Creeks were escorted to Indian Territory over the "Trail of Tears". Resettled in Indian Territory, the Creeks rebuilt settlements, created a General Council, and adopted a written code of laws and a Constitution.

1867 The Creeks revised their constitution and modeled it after the U.S. Constitution with three branches.

Executive – Principal Chief and Second Chief
Legislative – National Council composed of the House of Kings (U.S. Senate) and the House of Warriors (House of Representative)
Judicial – Supreme Court

1868 Two-story hewn log structure with a breezeway separating the two legislative chambers was erected as the first capitol building in Okmulgee, newly selected capitol of the Creek Nation.

1877 The capitol structure burned.

1878 The current capitol building was built between June 1 and September 1 for $15,000. Deeper excavation was necessary because the "earth was not sufficiently firm at the depth specified in the contract to properly support a building such as that proposed," which added $225 to the original contract. Special furnishings included a bell for the cupola, "of suitable size and tone," and a copper eagle, "5 feet 6 inches spread," both of which remain in place today.

1885 The National Council resolved to establish a National Library in the Capitol building.

1900 Foundation settling caused the building to crack and walls to bulge. 20 stone pilasters were built from the bottom of the footings to the under side of the "plancher"; 4 each on the East and West sides and 6 each on the North and South. 10 tie rods ran through the building to connect the pilasters on either side, each end terminated by a 12-inch star washer.

1900-06 The Intertribal Council, composed of delegates from the Five Civilized Tribes and the Plains Tribes residing in Indian Territory met in the council House in Okmulgee.

1907 The Five civilized Tribes were required to dissolve Tribal Government and have the Principal chief federally appointed instead of elected, which continued until 1971.

1907 Okmulgee county began leasing the council House from the tribe for $2,000 a year.

1914 A group lead by the Daughters of the American Revolution were formed as a committee to promote preservation of the Council House.

1917 The County moved into the new Court House. The Chamber of Commerce, Red Cross, and Civil Defense subsequently occupied the council House.

1919 In July under federal order, the Tribe sold the property to the city of Okmulgee purchased by a $100,000 bond issue. Talk began about tearing the building down to make room for a hotel. Support gathered, but others defended the Council House as a memorial to the Creek Indian Nation.

In September, demolition advocates lured officials away and demolished the perimeter stone walls. This vandalism backfired as outraged citizens gathered support for keeping the structure. Stones from the wall were used to construct the piers and gates that stand today at the corners and entrances to the site and the walkways that lead to the building.

1923 Judge Orlando Swain and 14 tribal members and other Okmulgee citizens organized the Creek Indian Memorial Association (CIMA) to collect and protect artifacts and records relating to the history and culture of the Muscogee Creek Tribe. The museum occupied only a part of the building until 1971.

1928 The Sunday Times Democrat of Okmulgee, calling for support of a hotel, deferred to vocal preservation sentiments by suggesting the Council House be moved to another setting, with even the trees transplanted.

Will Rogers appeared locally and provided his own advice:

> "...You can go to any town in the country and find a post office and a hotel, but there is only one town in the world where you can find a Creek National Council House."

1961 The National Park Service included the entire city block – the Council House and the grounds – on the National Register as a national Historic Landmark. This is the highest designation of historic properties in the United States. There are only 11 in Oklahoma in 1989.

1986-87 The Rocky Mountain Regional Office of the national Park Service sponsored an evaluation of the condition of the Creek Council House Museum.

1987 The National Trust for Historic Preservation premiered a photographic exhibit at the Annual Conference of the National Trust in Washington D.C., which celebrated 16 unique examples of the heritage of the constitution and democracy in America. Titled "America's Uncommon Places: The Blessings of liberty." The Creek Council was designated one of the 16 uncommon places. The exhibit went on to tour major cities.

The City of Okmulgee granted CIMA a 63 year lease on the Council House in commemoration of CIMA's 63 year history of support for the Council House.

Nore' V. Winter, Preservation Consultant and Ray E. Kramer, A.I.A. integrated their evaluation of the Council House into a Creek Council House Museum Master Plan.

1988-89 The CIMA Board of Trustees, Museum Staff, and over 100 community volunteers are working to raise approximately $1.7 million for the restoration and preservation of the Creek Council House.

1989 On September 12, bids for the reconstruction design from five design architects 9selected for their experience in historical reconstruction) will be evaluated by the Okmulgee City Council. At that time one firm will be selected to begin the design phase of the project.

SYNOPSIS OF COUNCIL HOUSE HISTORY AND CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

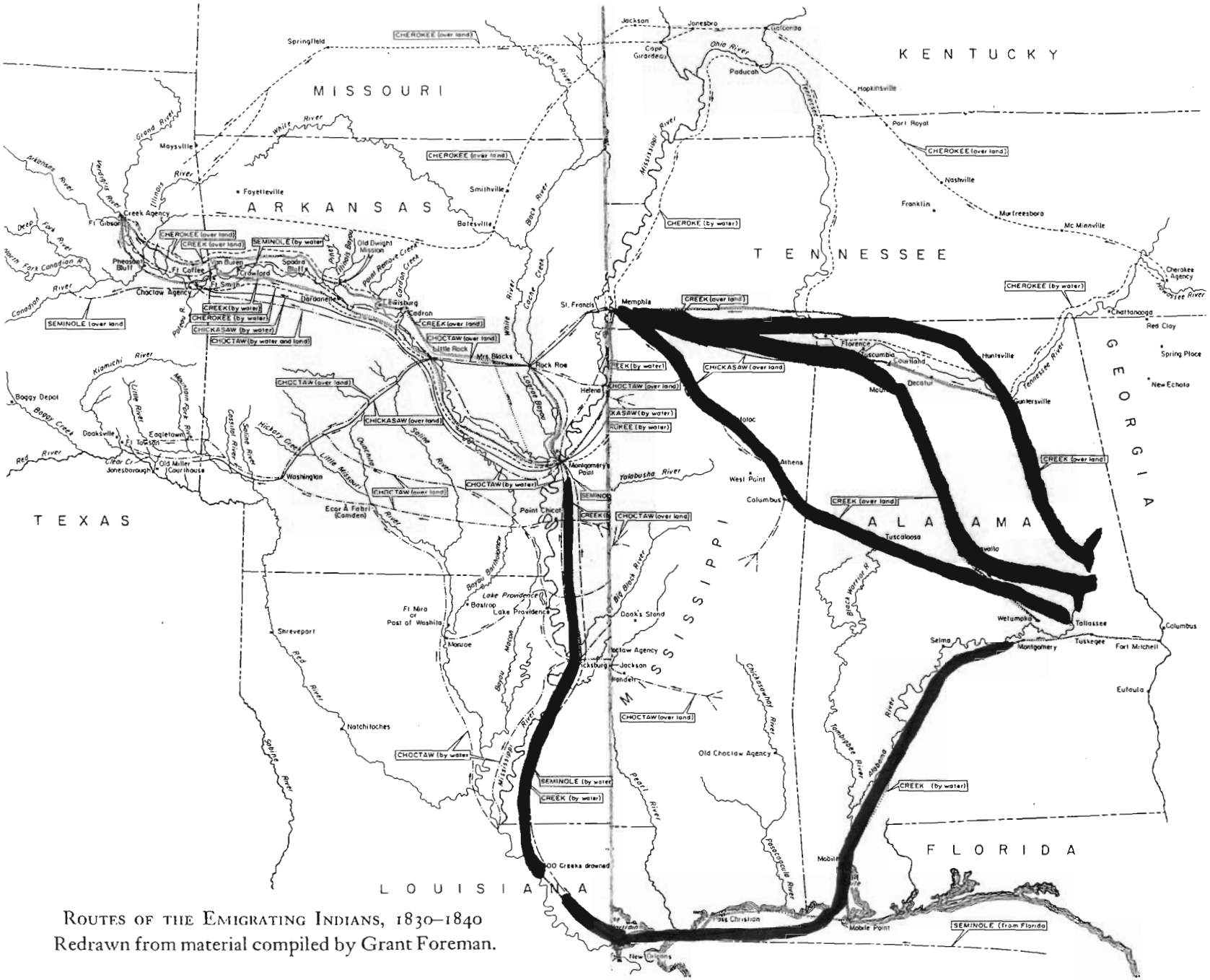
The Creek Council House Museum building was built in 1878 by the Muscogee Creek People after their removal from their homelands in Georgia and Alabama. The building was constructed for the purpose of providing a "Capitol Building" in which to conduct their tribal affairs. In 1906, after the sovereignty of the tribes was abolished, the Department of Interior, through an Act of Congress, took possession of the Council House. In 1917, the Department of Interior successfully negotiated the sale of the Council House building and grounds to the City of Okmulgee.

In 1923, Judge Orlando B. Swain formed the Creek Indian Memorial Association Board of Trustees (CIMA) for the purpose of preserving the Indian cultures (specifically the Muscogee(Creek) culture and history) and educating the public about those cultures. The CIMA (15 member volunteer board) in a non-profit, tax exempt organization that leases the Council House from the City of Okmulgee, and oversees operations of the Museum. The Council House Board is a City appointed Board (5 volunteer members) serving as liaison between the City of Okmulgee and the CIMA, and attending to the general needs of the building and grounds.

The Creek Council House Museum currently hosts approximately 9,000 visitors a year, representing every state in the U.S. and over 20 foreign countries. The Creek Council House Museum is used as a research center for the study of Muscogee (Creek) culture and history. We provided assistance and information to almost 300 individual research requests in 1991. Over 200 area public schools requested and received educational programs and "hands on" presentations in 1991. The Red Stick Gallery gift shop is a retail shop owned and operated by the CIMA. All profits generated from the gift shop are used to purchase items for the collection, to provide educational programs, to purchase archival materials for preservation of the collection and for general CIMA operations.

The National Park Service placed the Creek Council House onto the National Register of Historic Places in 1961. The entire city block, including the grounds, is part of the National Register of Historic Landmark designation. In 1993, a year-long restoration project of the Creek Council House was completed. Also in 1993, the CIMA and City of Okmulgee were awarded one of sixteen Honor Awards by the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the Council House Restoration.

Muscogee Creek Nation Area Maps



ROUTES OF THE EMIGRATING INDIANS, 1830–1840
Redrawn from material compiled by Grant Foreman.

Stemerkety Nenne (Road of Suffering)

HOMELA... OKLAHOMA INDIANS

20. REMOVAL OF THE FIVE TRIBES

Removal of the Five Civilized Tribes to Oklahoma was a process which lasted more than twenty years, beginning with the Choctaw treaties of 1816, 1820, and 1825 and the Cherokee treaties of 1817 and 1828. The movement ended with the efforts to comb the Seminoles out of the Florida swamps in the 1840's. Some small bands of southeastern Indians went west before the removal treaties, and many Indian hunters regularly crossed the Arkansas country to reach the buffalo plains.

In exchange for their land in Mississippi and Alabama the Choctaws were to receive a large tract south of the Arkansas and Canadian rivers. The Treaty of Doak's Stand, 1820, provided an eastern boundary for the Choctaw settlements on a line extending north from the mouth of Little River to the Arkansas. Because of white squatters in the area, however, a new treaty in 1825 moved the boundary west approximately to the present border of Arkansas from the Red River to the Arkansas River.

In a series of removals the Choctaws traveled west by various routes, in some instances using riverboats for a part of the journey. Although they endured great hardships on the road west, their travail was, perhaps, less painful than the suffering of tribes that moved a longer distance.

Most of the Chickasaws traveled across Arkansas by wagon, at least for part of the way. Riverboats on the Mississippi, St. Francis, and Arkansas rivers provided a part of the removal facilities.

Cherokee removal parties usually crossed western Kentucky to Golconda on the Ohio, and moved across southern Illinois to the Cape Girardeau ferry on the Mississippi. The "Trail of Tears" was the overland passage across Missouri and Arkansas. Many of the people, especially infants and the elderly, died and were buried along one or another of the trails. One of the fourteen wagon trains went west across central Arkansas from Chickasaw Bluff (Memphis), and a few bands moved west from Cape Girardeau to southwestern Missouri before turning south to the Cherokee lands in the Indian territory.

Creek migration was complicated by warfare, since some bands resisted the process of removal. Like the Cherokees, the Creeks suffered because of bitter controversy within the tribe over removal.

Perhaps Seminole removal was the most costly of all. For seven years this least "civilized" of the five tribes fought against the government's order to leave Florida. Most bands traveled by boat from the Florida coast to New Orleans and by river steamers to Little Rock or farther upstream. The final stage was accomplished by wagon. The tribe was reduced by one-third as a result of the war and the hardships of the long journey.

34. TRIBAL LOCATIONS IN OKLAHOMA

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 was followed by many cessions of land and removals of other eastern Indians besides the Five Civilized Tribes. In 1831 the Senecas of the Sandusky Valley exchanged their Ohio land for 67,000 acres lying north of the new Cherokee Nation. Soon afterward a mixed band of Senecas and Shawnees ceded their land near Lewiston, Ohio, and received 60,000 acres adjoining the Seneca tract in Indian Territory. In 1833 a band of Quapaws moved from the Red River to a tract of 96,000 acres, also north and east of the Cherokees.

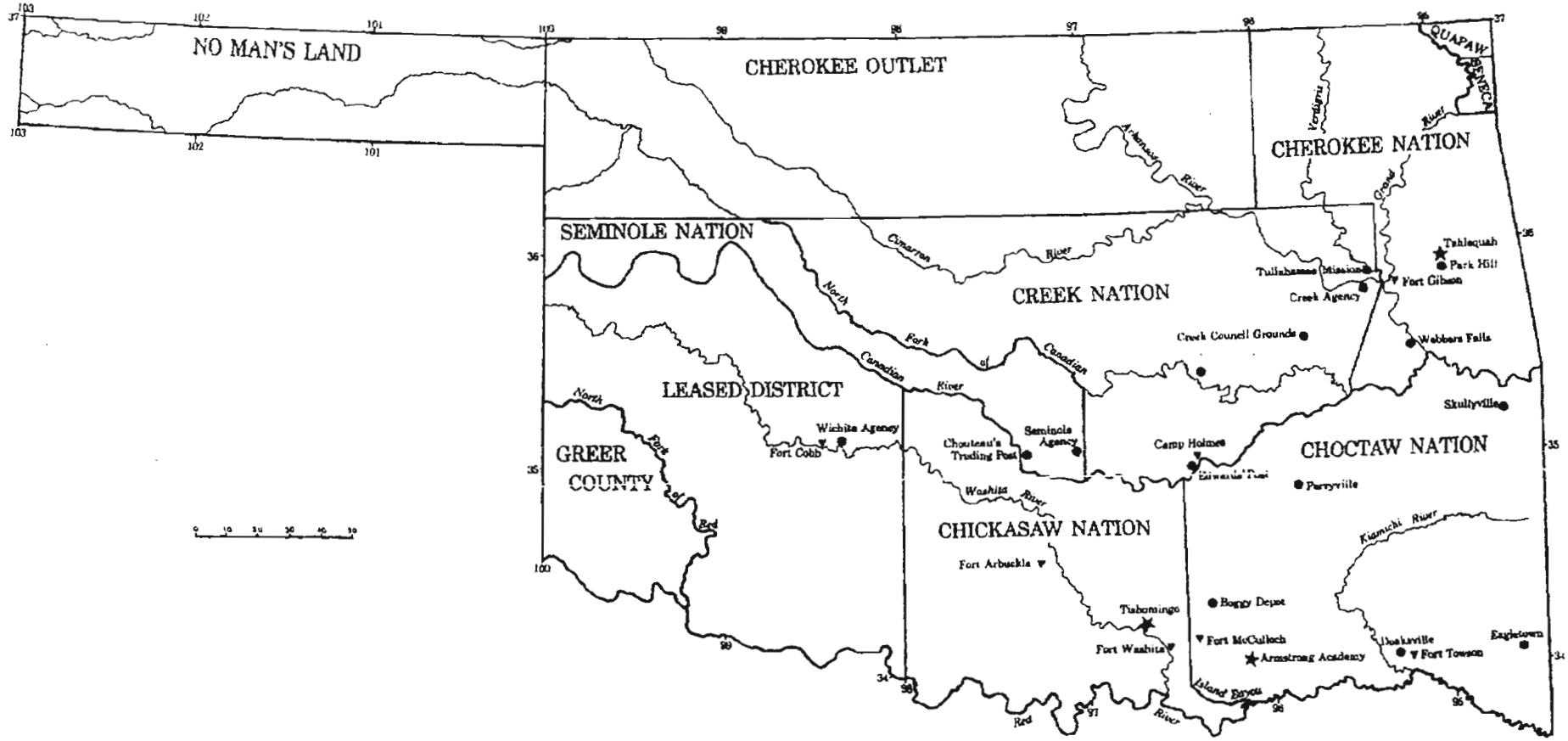
After the Civil War space was found in the district of northeastern Indian Territory for additional bands: Ottawas, Weas, Peorias, Kaskaskias, Piankashaws, and Miamis. Fragments of other tribes affiliated with these bands were brought in with them in some instances. The little Oregon band, the Modocs, brought in from Fort McPherson, Nebraska, in 1873, was settled on a tract of 4,040 acres, purchased from the Shawnees.

Two hundred Wyandotte Indians moved in with the Senecas in 1857. Driven north by guerrilla bands during the Civil War, both Senecas and Wyandottes returned in 1865. Two years later the Wyandottes obtained a reservation of 21,246 acres along the northern boundary of the Seneca tract.

Detached groups of Indians other than the Five Tribes settled permanently on the lands of these Indians in eastern Indian Territory from time to time. For example, the Choctaws admitted nineteen Catawbas from North Carolina in 1851 and granted full rights of citizenship to fourteen of them in 1853. Other members of the tribe settled in the Creek Nation. Catawbas belong to the Siouan linguistic stock, detached from kindred tribes on the Plains before written history appeared in that part of North America. The Biloxis of the Gulf Coast and the Winnebagos of Wisconsin are other Siouan tribes found by Europeans east of the Mississippi.

Two groups of Delaware Indians live in Oklahoma. A band from the Brazos in Texas came to the Wichita Agency in 1859. Their descendants live in communities near Anadarko and Carnegie. Another band moved by contract into the Cherokee Nation from their reservation in Kansas in 1867.

The Creek Indians, of Muskhogean linguistic stock, were accustomed from early times to adopting fragment groups into the tribe. The Creek Nation in Oklahoma contained Indians from the Koasati, Hitchiti, Natchez, Apalachicola, Alabama, Tuskegee, and Yuchi (Euchee) tribes. All of these except the Yuchis belong to the Muskhogean language group.



INDIAN TERRITORY, 1855–1866

Major changes in the condition of the Chickasaws and Seminoles resulted from new treaties with the United States in 1855 and 1856. Secretary of the Interior Robert McClelland and Commissioner of Indian Affairs George W. Manypenny recognized the principle of self-government in dealing with the two smaller tribes.

By the terms of the Choctaw-Chickasaw agreement in June, 1855, Choctaw land west of the 98th meridian was leased to the United States to provide a home for the Wichitas and "such other tribes of Indians as the Government may desire to locate therein." For the lease, the United States agreed to pay $600,000 to the Choctaws and $200,000 to the Chickasaws.

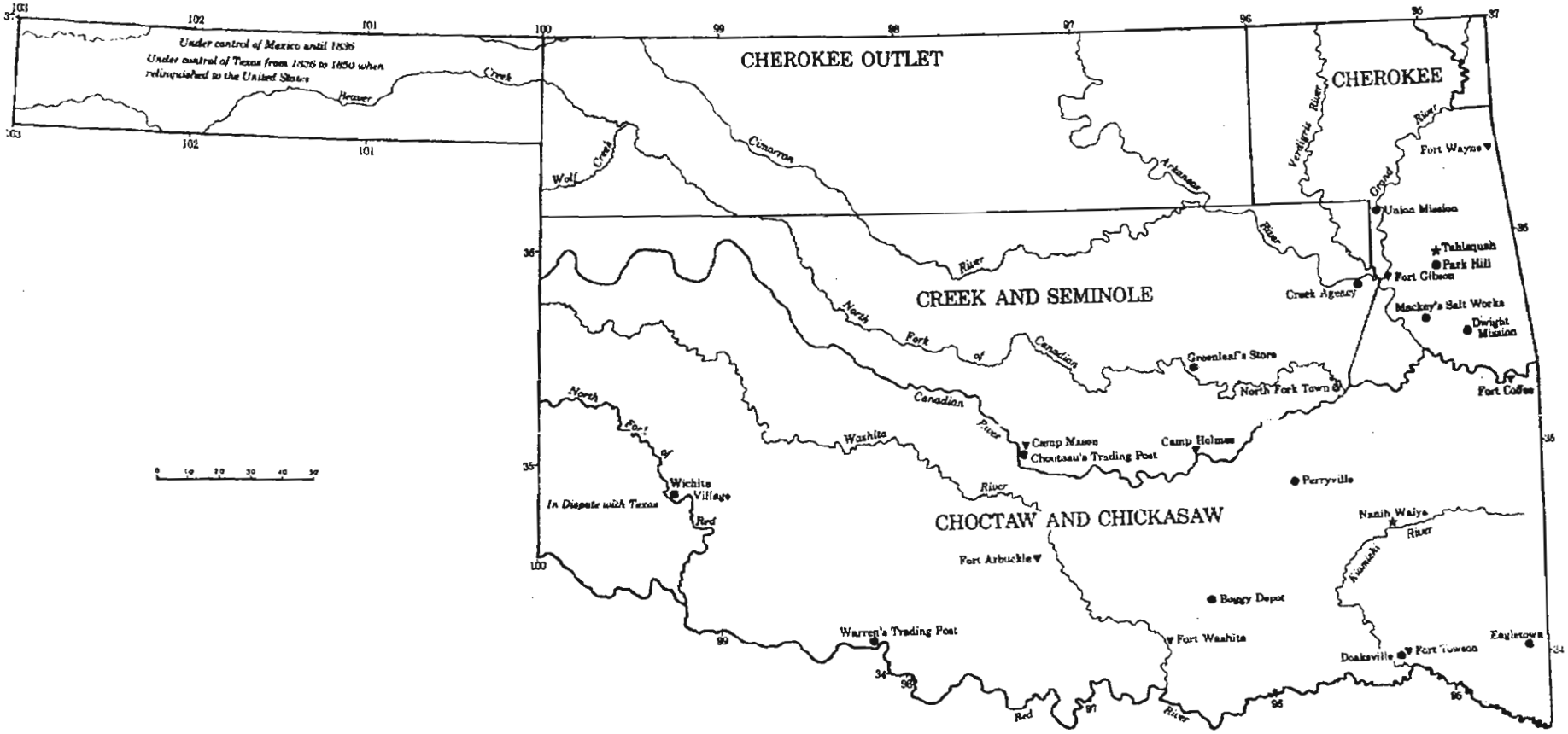
In consideration of the establishment of a separate Chickasaw Nation, the tribe agreed to pay the Choctaws $150,000. The Chickasaw western boundary was the 98th meridian from the Canadian to the Red; and the eastern boundary followed Island Bayou from its mouth to the source of its eastern branch, thence due north to the Canadian River.

Each tribe was "secured in the unrestricted right of self-government, and full jurisdiction over persons and property within their respective limits," with the proviso that the Constitution of the United States should be recognized as the final authority.

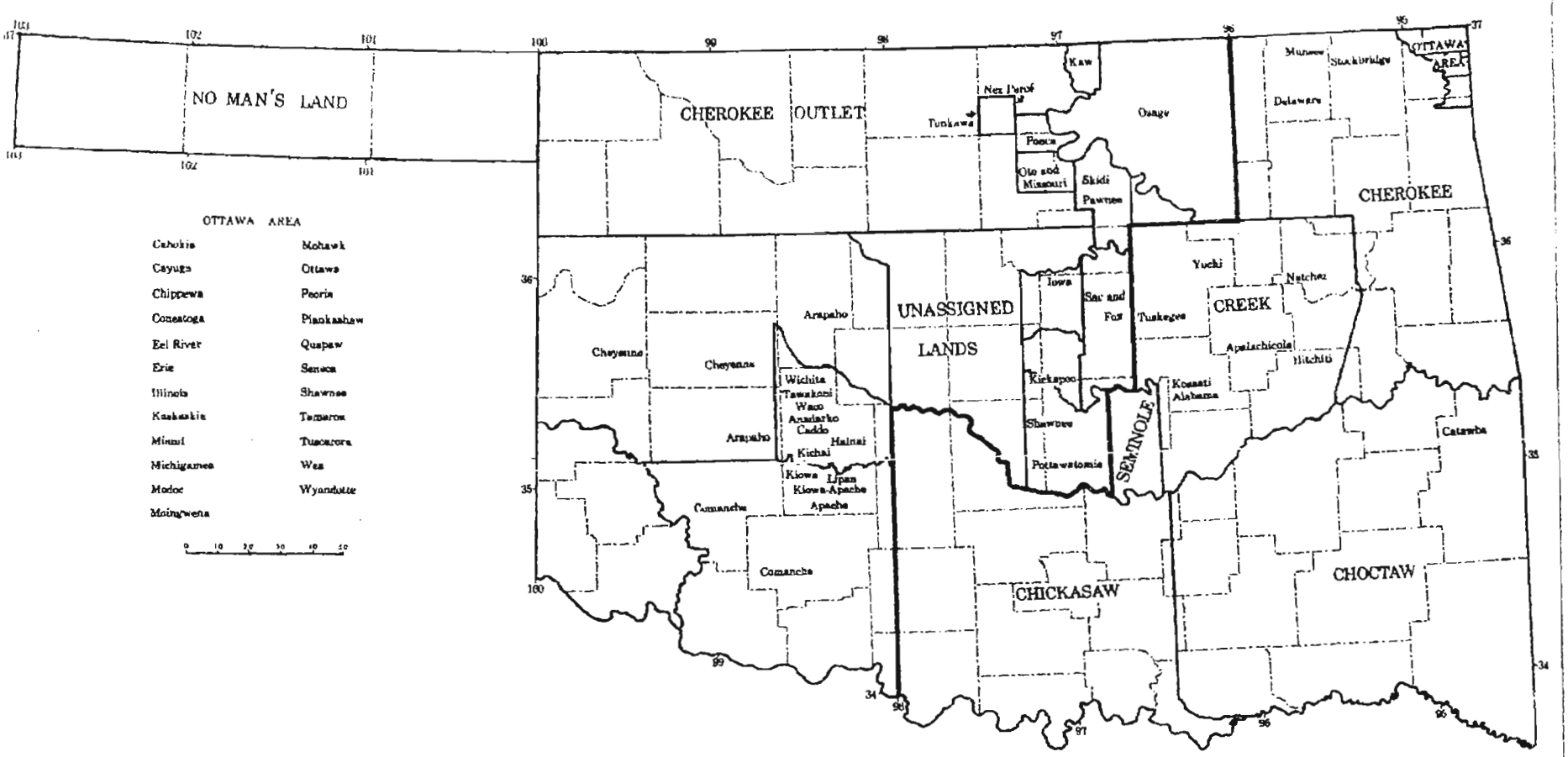
The Seminole-Creek agreement in 1856 to maintain separate tribal organizations was a parallel movement toward self-government. The Seminole lands began with a line extending due north from the mouth of Pond Creek (Ock-hi-appo) on the Canadian to the North Fork of the Canadian; thence up that stream to the southern line of the Cherokee Outlet and west along that line to the 100th meridian; thence down the Canadian to the point of beginning.

Of great importance to the Seminoles was the provision for separate tribal government, which relieved them from the domination of the Creek majority. The United States agreed to construct an agency building for the Seminoles and to pay the tribe $90,000 to cover the losses involved in moving to the new location. The contract for the new agency building and council house was awarded to Henry Pope of Arkansas, and the buildings were constructed "one mile west of the eastern boundary of the Seminole country, and about two miles north of the road recently laid out by Lieutenant Beale."

The rectangle between the 100th meridian and the 103d meridian, from 36°30′ north latitude to the 37th parallel, was not claimed by any of the adjacent states or territories. The Texas Panhandle extended north to 36°30′; the state of Kansas had the 37th parallel as its southern boundary; the Cherokee Outlet extended west to the 100th meridian; and the eastern boundary of New Mexico was along the 103d meridian. Therefore, the rectangle that became the seventh county of the original Oklahoma Territory was frequently called "No Man's Land."



INDIAN TERRITORY, 1830–1855



TRIBAL LOCATIONS IN OKLAHOMA

William McIntosh had begun the compilation of Creek laws before the tribe removed from Georgia. As early as 1840 the two districts in the West attempted united action in a General Council, with Roley McIntosh presiding as chief of the Arkansas District and Opothle Yahola sitting with him as chief of the Canadian District. The years 1859 and 1860 saw a number of interesting constitutional experiments, but the internal conflict of the era put an end to all legal progress.

On October 12, 1867, a brief written constitution was adopted by a vote of the Creek people. The National Council, composed of the House of Kings and the House of Warriors, was given the power to formulate and pass laws. Each town was entitled to elect one member of the House of Kings, while members of the lower house were apportioned among the towns roughly on the basis of population. The principal chief, with his appointed private secretary, was given the function of law enforcement. The erudite messages of semiliterate chiefs are to be explained only by their skill in the selection of secretaries.

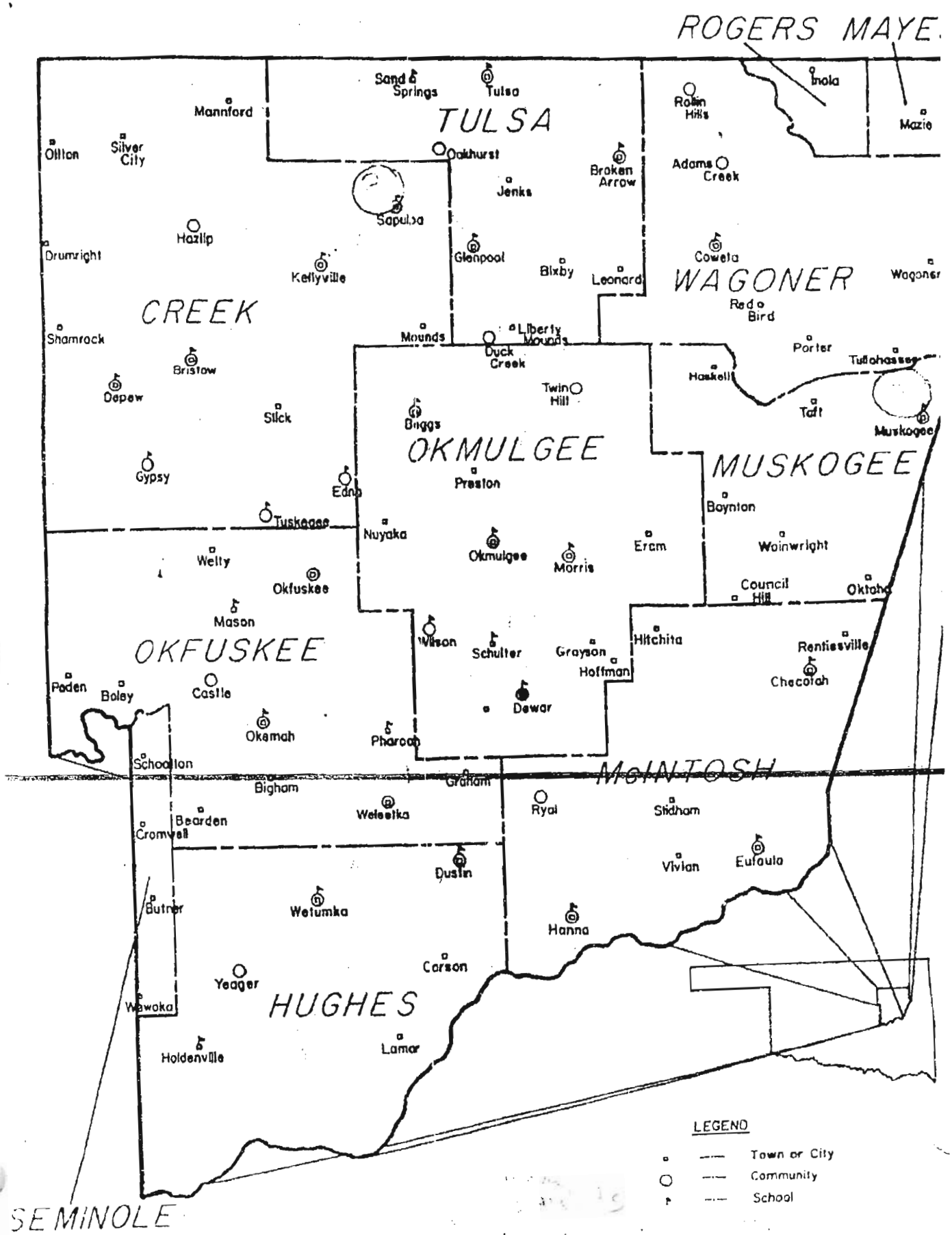
The constitution of 1867 divided the Creek Nation into six districts. The National Council elected a judge for each district, the principal chief appointed six district attorneys with the approval of the Council, and the voters of each district elected a captain and four privates to serve as a light-horse police force. District officers were chosen for a term of two years. The principal chief, a second chief to succeed him in the event of his death in office, and members of the National Council were elected, each to serve for four years in his office.

Trial by jury was provided for civil and criminal cases. All suits at law in which the amount in dispute was more than $100 were tried by the Supreme Court, composed of five justices named by the National Council for terms of four years.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the Creek government was its use of the town as the unit of elections and administration. After the Creeks removed to the West, the people no longer restricted their residence to the towns, but the older system of governmental units was preserved.

Principal Chiefs of the Creek Nation, 1867–1907

1867–75	Samuel Chocote
1875–76	Locher Harjo
1876–79	Ward Coachman
1879–83	Samuel Chocote
1883–87	Joseph M. Perryman
1887–95	Legus Perryman
1895	Edward Bullette
1895–99	Isparhecher
1899–1907	Pleasant Porter


ROGERS
MAYE
TULSA
CREEK
WAGONER
OKMULGEE
MUSKOGEE
OKFUSKEE
McINTOSH
HUGHES
SEMINOLE
Sand Springs
Tulsa
Inola
Mannford
Robin Hills
Mazie
Oilton
Silver City
Oakhurst
Broken Arrow
Adams Creek
Jenks
Sapulpa
Hazlip
Drumright
Glenpool
Bixby
Leonard
Coweta
Wagoner
Kellyville
Red Bird
Shamrock
Mounds
Liberty
Duck Creek
Porter
Tullahassee
Bristow
Haskell
Depew
Twin Hill
Slick
Taft
Muskogee
Biggs
Gypsy
Preston
Edna
Boynton
Tuskegee
Nuyaka
Okmulgee
Morris
Eram
Wainwright
Welty
Okfuskee
Council Hill
Oktaha
Mason
Wilson
Schulter
Grayson
Hoffman
Hitchita
Rentiesville
Checotah
Poden
Boley
Castle
Dewar
Okemah
Pharoah
Schoolton
Graham
Bigham
Ryal
Stidham
Bearden
Weleetka
Cromwell
Dustin
Vivian
Eufaula
Butner
Wetumka
Hanna
Carson
Yeager
Wewoka
Holdenville
Lamar
LEGEND
Town or City
Community
School